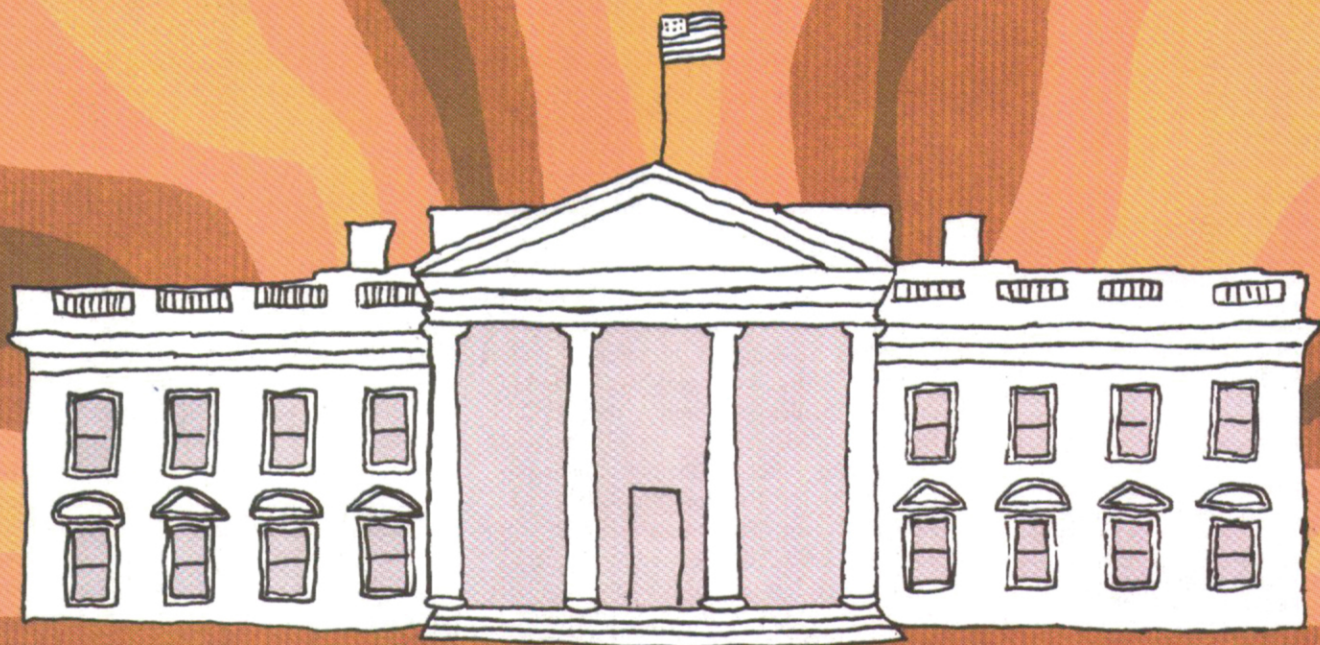


BOB DYLAN THROUGH THE AGES • ABORTION UNDER ATTACK

# In These Times

INDEPENDENT NEWS & VIEWS

December 10, 2001



## Democracy Begins at Home

The 2000 election must not be forgotten • BY JOHN NICHOLS

More ballots, not more bullets • BY BENJAMIN BARBER

PLUS | Doug Ireland on the long war  
| Naomi Klein on kamikaze capitalists



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## Editorial

# Selling the War

**T**he war in Afghanistan is being fought on two fronts, and the news from the front lines, which span the globe, doesn't look good.

In Afghanistan, the military war appears to have hit a rut. (Were the country less arid, we would resurrect the quagmire metaphor.) Despite relentless bombing, bin Laden and the Taliban survive. The so-called "propaganda war" isn't going much better. The United States is confronting an increasingly skeptical global audience. In an interview with the *San Jose Mercury News*, an unnamed administration official put it this way: "We are clearly losing the hearts and minds issue."

So the Defense Department has hired The Rendon Group, a Washington PR firm, to manage public opinion in 79 countries. According to company literature, Rendon provides "distinctive approaches to communications challenges." Selling the world on the U.S. decision to cluster-bomb Afghanistan poses a distinct challenge—particularly for Rendon employees who, because of their "admiration and respect for cultural diversity" do "believe in people."

Nothing is less people-friendly than cluster bombs, weaponry designed to eliminate what the military calls "soft targets." The United States has dropped an undisclosed number of cluster bombs on Afghanistan, yet it is loath to admit that any civilians might have been hit. On October 24, U.N. employees at a mine-clearing office in Herat, Afghanistan, reported that hundreds of residents of a nearby village were afraid to leave their homes out of fear of unexploded cluster bomb canisters.

When dropped from a plane, each cluster bomb opens up and disperses about 200 "bomblets," about 90 percent of which detonate upon hitting the ground. The other 10 percent don't. These live bomblets pack 30 times the explosive force of anti-personnel land mines and can explode at the slightest touch. Further, because these munitions are so unstable and so powerful, they cannot be disposed of with standard mine-clearing techniques.

During the war against Serbia, the United States and its allies dropped 1,400 cluster bombs. As a result, an estimated 30,000

unexploded bomblets littered the Yugoslavian countryside. The ongoing carnage from those bomblets led the International Committee of the Red Cross last year to call for an international ban on cluster bombs. The bombs are particularly threatening to children, who might be attracted to the bombs' colorful casings. In Afghanistan, that risk is compounded because unexploded cluster bomblets are the same yellow color as the emergency food packages. As a result, the United States has prepared radio messages warning the "noble Afghan people" not to "confuse the cylinder-shaped bomb with the rectangular food bag." (Try explaining that to a starving 6-year-old.)

Back at home, the propaganda war is off to a better start. On October 2, the State Department filled a crucial post, appointing ad executive Charlotte Beers as undersecretary of public diplomacy. (The Office of Public Diplomacy was originally established during the Reagan administration to pressure the press and public into supporting the administration's covert war in Central America.)

The Office of Public Diplomacy seems already to be hard at work. In late October, CNN's standards and practices department sent out a memo that read in part, "We must remain careful not to focus

**Try explaining the difference between a "cylinder-shaped bomb" and a "rectangular food bag" to a starving 6-year-old.**

excessively on the casualties and hardships in Afghanistan that will inevitably be a part of this war, or to forget that it is the Taliban leadership that is responsible for the situation Afghanistan is now in." The memo went on to suggest that reporters might also want to tell viewers that the war is in response to a terrorist attack "that killed close to 5,000 innocent people in the U.S."

Beers, a former executive at the J. Walter Thompson ad agency, began her career selling the American public on the virtues of Uncle Ben's Rice. Now she must hype the vices of Uncle bin Laden.

—Joel Bleifuss

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Cover: Seamus Holman

# Letters

## Zbig Mistake

Lauren Courcy's recent "U.S.-Afghan Timeline" (November 12) is missing a major "lowlight" from American meddling in Afghanistan. In a 1998 interview with the French press, Jimmy Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, admitted that the United States provided military aid to the Afghanistan opposition in 1979 at least five months *before* the Soviet military invasion.

Brzezinski told the interviewer that he believed "this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention" and that he had told Carter as much. When asked if he regretted this decision, Brzezinski replied, "Regret what? The secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap and you want me to regret it? The day that the Soviets officially crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter: We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War."

In 1998, Brzezinski was seemingly incapable of viewing the horror of war, torture, displacement and repression his actions helped bring on the Afghan people as something to feel bad about. I doubt that the attitudes of people like him have changed much since September 11.

**Arthur Stamoulis**  
Philadelphia

## Thought Contagion

I enjoyed reading Naomi Klein's "Bin Laden and the Damage Done" (October 29). Unfortunately, at the end, she got it all wrong. It is not that our political leaders read our collective pulse via opinion polls and then adjust their politics and policies accordingly, but exactly the opposite. Our leaders on both sides of the aisle manufacture consent. How else would you explain the overt and coded messages that are beamed at us every single minute, when we watch network or cable television?

The repetitive flag-waving that is closely tied to the war rhetoric makes the mental connection between patriotism and war. The bombardment of our visual sense with the stark face of President Bush, who declares that every nation that is not "with us" (read: accepting the policy of his administration) supports terrorism, and by simple transference, every individual as well.

And what about the print media? Except for a few token letters, what you see in the leading newspapers of the nation is the war rhetoric of Thomas Friedman or the foaming-at-the-mouth conservatism of William Safire. The massive thought con-

tagion that is going on puts to shame the Communist propaganda machine that was used to brainwash whole populations.

They say that the first casualty of war is the truth. Not so! The first casualty of war is freedom of speech, and a close second is the freedom to think.

**George M. Frankfurter**  
Destin, Florida

## No Comparison

It is not valid to compare, as Joel Bleifuss does, the terrorism produced by a political impasse, such as that in Ireland and Israel, with the September 11 attacks ("Say No to War," October 29).

Groups such as the IRA and the PLO are (or were) pursuing legitimate political ends by illegitimate means. That doesn't make their terrorism right, but it is clear (although not apparently to many in Israel) that a permanent end to violence in those situations can only come as part of a political settlement (such as Northern Ireland's Good Friday Agreement) that both sides can live with.

Bin Laden, on the other hand, has no legitimate political project. As Naomi Klein so perceptively points out in the same issue, although bin Laden is adept at manipulating real injustices for his own ends, he is not really motivated by those injustices. His support for the Palestinian cause is recent, opportunistic and unwanted by the Palestinian leadership.

**Ben Bowden**  
Singapore

## Stop Whining

The documentary *Beyond the Veil* by Saira Shah aired on mainstream CNN, not progressive media. Doesn't that belie Susan J. Douglas' claim that our nation is blinded due to corporate media conspiracies ("Oedipus in Manhattan," October 29)?

Progressive media seem preoccupied with whining about how their single-minded viewpoints aren't readily accepted in the mainstream. A million Iraqis died since 1991 because Saddam Hussein didn't comply with U.N. (not U.S.) provisions. One can argue that economic sanctions are an ineffective means and hurt the people meant to be helped, but it is a stretch to make sanctions the cause. In this zeal, they forget to show the other side.

Get a grip! In a free society nobody stops left-liberal writing and whining, but it is unrealistic to expect mainstream media to afford 5 percent of the views more than 5 percent of the coverage.

**Erich Kellner**  
Walnut Creek, California

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**Terry LaBan**





## Irish Arms

The IRA moves forward with decommissioning—but some loyalists don't want peace

By Kelly Candaele

What happens when a guerrilla army wants to gradually put their weapons "beyond use"—to fully embrace a political way forward—and their opponents won't let them? In Northern Ireland, the answer is political chaos.

When Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams stated weeks ago that he was encouraging the IRA to begin the decommissioning of some of their arsenal, and within days the announcement came that the process had begun, many thought the unprecedented move would be rewarded by jubilation in the unionist community. After all, the decommissioning of IRA weapons has been a constant demand of unionist leaders since the official peace process began with the IRA ceasefire of 1994. It also had been a major barrier to consolidating the new political institutions established under the Good Friday Agreement, signed in 1998.

Adams said that the IRA gesture, unprecedented in its violent struggle to remove the British from Ireland, would deprive opponents of the peace process of their main argument. But strong elements within unionism have never reconciled themselves to sharing power with Sinn Féin or more moderate nationalists, preferring the certainties of continued conflict to what they perceive as inexorable nationalist "gains."

David Trimble, still leader of a bitterly divided Ulster Unionist Party, called for his ministers to re-enter the Northern Irish Assembly after the IRA move. Whatever his flaws—in many ways he has been a reluctant leader—Trimble realizes the importance of working the political process and firmly believes that the union with Britain is safe. But as two members of his own party defected, again demanding more from the IRA, Trimble failed to achieve the majority of the unionist vote in the Assembly he needed to be re-elected first minister.

In the complex voting rules of the Assembly designed to ensure majority support from both communities, the lack of majority support from unionist members, which included anti-Good Friday followers of Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), meant that a more circuitous route for saving Trimble and the institutions had to be found.

In an act of political sleight-of-hand, the small "non-sectarian" Alliance Party agreed to redesignate some of its Assembly members as "unionist," allowing Trimble the majority he needed to return as first minister. Anti-Good Friday unionists regarded the move as an indication of Trimble's desperation, calling the whole process a "circus." But others saw the Alliance Party's actions as a healthy sign of a more malleable and fluid political identity in the face of a deeply polarized society. After the vote, which Paisley tried to block with a failed legal appeal, fighting broke out between nationalist and DUP Assembly members during a press conference.

But the political maneuvering can't hide the fundamental fissure within the unionist community. Trimble's UUP lost seats to Paisley in the last parliamentary election, and there is concern that in the next Assembly elections in 2003, the DUP will overtake Trimble. That would result in more demands for complete IRA disarmament and an attempt to undermine Sinn Féin's democratic mandate.

And Adams has his own difficulties. While he never moves without thoroughly preparing the political ground beforehand, decommissioning of weapons, even to an independent body, has been difficult for many Republicans in the absence of Irish unity. His main concern has been to avoid a major split within the IRA that would send more volunteers into the arms of the Real IRA, a dissident group that opposes Adams and the peace agreement. Before a meeting of Sinn Féin's governing body, Adams admitted that "the last week [of decommissioning] has been a



David Trimble's Ulster Unionist Party is bitterly divided.

hurtful one for many Republicans." He added: "Decommissioning was an act of patriotism. Patriotism requires pain. The prize is a just and peaceful Ireland."

Extremists continue to hamper the peace process. The Real IRA tried to explode a car bomb in Birmingham on November 3, not far from the location of a previous IRA bomb that killed 21 people in 1974. On the unionist side, recent rampages in North Belfast against Catholic youths attempting to attend school have been reminiscent of the ugliest periods during the American civil rights struggle.

While the Royal Ulster Constabulary has been renamed the Police Service of Northern Ireland, Sinn Féin has refused to serve on the public boards that oversee the police. While the moderate, nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party is serving, Sinn Féin believes more thoroughgoing reform is necessary before it will participate. Transforming the largely Protestant police into a representative and effective force could be the most important challenge Northern Ireland faces in the coming years. IRA and loyalist vigilantism and police collusion with loyalist paramilitaries has plagued both communities.

The IRA's move was a bold one, even though it was made in the context of increasing political and moral pressure in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. If the unionists and the British can be as bold, the last act of a grueling national tragedy may have opened. ■

CATHAL MCNAUGHTON/GETTY IMAGES



## Going Against the Green

New Yorkers elect Bloomberg as their next mayor

By Doug Ireland

NEW YORK—The real story of the election that made Republican billionaire Michael Bloomberg the next mayor of this city is the self-destruction of Mark Green. Exit polls showed that 55 percent of the victor's voters were *against* Democrat Green rather than for Bloomberg. Why?

Green drained enthusiasm for his candidacy among traditional Democratic constituencies by running away from his liberal reputation. This process began in Green's second term as the city's public advocate, when he attached himself like a mollusk to Bill and Hillary Clinton, defending their sleazy hypocrisies before any microphone the adept publicity hog could find.

And when the first lady (who godmothered the serpent Dick Morris' cynical triangulations) ran for senator, Green was her most visible surrogate when she was kept hidden from the press by her handlers. Having justified the Clintons' destruction of the Rooseveltian liberal heritage he'd long embraced, Green should have surprised no one when he morphed into an electoral Pander Bear. But he did.

Green shunted aside his campaign manager, Richard Schrader—a former director of New York Citizen Action who is widely respected by progressives here—in favor of counsel from his older brother Steve Green, a wealthy real estate magnate (and a Republican). As chief fundraiser, Steve introduced Mark to the city's business community, to which Mark sucked up throughout the year.

To win the runoff for the Democratic nomination against Fernando "Freddy" Ferrer, he echoed the same racially divisive rhetoric he had criticized during the primaries, when it was used by the most conservative candidate in the race, Peter Vallone.

Already embittered at Green for running a flagrantly code-worded TV ad designed to raise white fear of Ferrer, Hispanics were furious when, a week before the election, the *Daily News* broke a story placing top Green campaign aides in a pre-runoff meeting at which racially inflammatory literature painting Ferrer as Al Sharpton's puppet was planned to be used. Sharpton threatened to call for an election boycott unless Green investigat-



Michael Bloomberg is a winner.

ed and fired those responsible, and Ferrer (who had formally endorsed Green and made a few token campaign stops with him) pointedly absented himself from both a \$1,500-minimum fundraiser co-chaired by the Clintons on the Friday before the vote and a public "unity" rally that weekend featuring not only Bill and Hill, but Senators Chuck Schumer and Ted Kennedy as well.

In Ferrer's home borough of the Bronx, Democratic boss Roberto Ramirez closed the party's county headquarters for the campaign's final three days, and his troops sat on their hands. Bloomberg wound up with 50 percent of the Hispanic vote—11 points better than Giuliani ever did—and 22 percent of the black vote (two points better than Rudy's showing four years ago).

Although labor leaders formally switched their unions' endorsements to the newly centrist Green after the runoff, their half-hearted efforts—after months of anybody-but-Green maneuverings—weren't all that convincing; Bloomberg ended up with 38 percent of the union vote. And just when one thought Green could sink no lower, in his only major policy pronouncement of the final cam-

paign, he came out in favor of legalizing casino gambling in the Big Apple. While popular, this most regressive form of taxation on the poor is a notion only a Pander Bear could embrace.

When a deliberately delayed endorsement of Bloomberg by Giuliani—made into a brilliant pass-the-torch TV spot that had Giuliani bidding farewell to the city—drove Bloomberg into a statistical dead heat with Green in the last week, the Democrat played into the say-anything image that his campaign performance had earned him by unleashing a last-minute barrage of near-hysterical attack ads against Bloomberg. These backfired with New Yorkers longing for civility in the post-September 11 gloom and fear. Bloomberg's most heavily aired negative ad featured a tape recording of Green's own words when he claimed that he would have been "better than Giuliani" in handling the city after the World Trade Center atrocity, and adding—

with effective understatement—just a single question: "Really?"

This spot reminded everyone of the arrogance Green displayed throughout the campaign. One anecdote tells it all: During the primary, Green was handshaking at the Educational Alliance, a venerable Lower East Side institution founded a century ago by Jewish Socialists (now serving mostly seniors known as "Edgies") and a must campaign stop for any Democrat. A grandmotherly Edgie came up and asked Green, "So, darling, what are you running for?" Green's withering reply: "Read the newspapers." He lost the normally Democratic Jewish vote (19 percent of the total turnout) to Bloomberg by two points.

Green alienated so many of his core constituents by betraying his past and by smug, self-important, cynical posturing that he has no one to blame for his defeat but himself. Green's character flaws cost him 30 percent of the voters who had supported him in the runoff, and permitted Bloomberg to purchase an election that no one thought he could win. And for all would-be opportunist Democrats, here endeth the lesson. ■



## There's a Police Riot Goin' On

Anti-war marchers feel the chill in Connecticut

By Hank Hoffman

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT—It was bad enough that police arrested 18 anti-war demonstrators during an unpermitted march on October 25 to the downtown office of hawkish U.S. Sen. Joseph Lieberman. Cops beat and pepper-sprayed a 61-year-old asthmatic man, cracking two of his ribs. Four or five other demonstrators were hit with pepper spray, and two marchers were thwacked with batons. Police drove their cars diagonally into the crowd to force it off the rush hour streets and onto the sidewalk.

And bicycle cops rammed their bike tires into the backs of marchers' legs, according to Chris Harris, a reporter with the *Hartford Advocate*. Harris called the reaction a "police riot."

But worse were the severe charges and high bonds slapped on several of the those arrested. More than a half-dozen activists were charged with felonies—specifically "inciting to riot" and "inciting injury to persons"—that carry potential five-to-20-year jail terms, even though eyewitnesses say the crowd was nonviolent and no property was damaged. Five of the "Hartford 18," as they are being called, had to post bonds of \$35,000 to \$50,000. All were held overnight. More than \$10,000 had to be paid to a bail bondsman, money that is unrecoverable even after the defendants make their court appearances.

Coming on the same day that the Senate voted 98 to 1 to grant law enforcement agencies broad new powers

to fight terrorism, the severity of the Hartford judicial and police response fanned fears that dissent will not be tolerated. Since September 11, there have been demonstrations in the thousands in New York City, Washington and Berkeley, and rallies and vigils have been organized on more than 150 college campuses. But the reaction to the Hartford demo—which, unlike most other actions, was an unpermitted street march—is the harshest to date.

Hartford civil rights attorney Leon Rosenblatt, who has provided legal counsel for some of those arrested and attended the demonstration, says the charges are "wild exaggerations." In the case of Adam Hurter, who was charged with "inciting injury to a person or property" after facilitating a sidewalk meeting after the arrests, eyewitness Rosenblatt says the charge is a "complete fiction and fabrication."

"It was quite obviously an attempt to stifle the peace movement," says Wes-

### Murder in Mexico

"I wanted to write to you because it is less likely that our communication will be intercepted," wrote Mexican human rights lawyer Digna Ochoa on August 21 in an e-mail to her sister. "I will not talk about this with you by telephone." Ochoa told her sister that she didn't think she was going to die—"bitter herbs never die," she said—but that she wanted "to make certain that you have my instructions if something happens to me."

Two months later, Ochoa was shot and killed in her office at the Miquel Augustin Pro Center for Human Rights in Mexico City, in what the city's prosecutor immediately called a political assassination. Ochoa was known for her work defending peasants and protesters against Mexico's military, including two workers who protested clear-cutting in Mexico by Boise Cascade and were allegedly tortured by the army into confessing to trumped-up drug charges. Ochoa had been kidnapped and tortured several times and narrowly escaped an attempt on her life in late 1999, when she was left bound and gagged in her apartment with the gas jets left on by her attackers.

Human rights organizations around the world decried the murder, saying it showed Mexican President Vicente Fox was not living up to campaign promises to root out corruption in the military, which had been accused of hundreds of assassinations and disappearances under the PRI, the party voted out when Fox won last year. "Fox seems to be more concerned about keeping the military happy than he is about stopping their abuses," Alejandro Queral of the Sierra Club told the *New York Times*.

### Drilling in Alaska, and Exxon Gets Off Easy

Public outrage over the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989 forced George Bush Sr. to abandon his plans for oil-drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, but the son is trying to go where his father

could not. In what could be a worrying precedent, Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced early in November that off-shore drilling had begun in Alaska using a new sub-sea pipeline that environmentalists say is risky and untried.

Prudhoe Bay, on Alaska's northeast coast, was developed for oil drilling in the '70s and already supplies 20 percent of U.S. oil; the new pipeline will potentially add 175 million barrels a day to Alaska's existing production. The Bush administration claims drilling will reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil, but environmentalists warn that leaks in the pipeline will be impossible to detect. "We are very concerned about the sub-sea pipeline," the Wilderness Society's Jim Waltman told the *Chicago Tribune*. "It's clearly got the potential of a disaster."

In a related story, a federal court threw out a 1999 Alaska jury's decision to award \$5.3 billion in punitive damages to those harmed or displaced by the Valdez spill, ordering a lower court to reconsider the award. The court left untouched an award of \$287 million in economic compensation for fishermen who lost their livelihood in the spill, but said the \$5.3 billion in damages was "excessive." In the Ninth Circuit Court's unanimous decision, Judge Andrew J. Kleinfeld defended Exxon's conduct in the case, saying it had done enough to clean up the spill and help fishermen and Alaska natives.

### A Protected Pantanal

The world's largest freshwater swamp has been designated a protected area by the Bolivian government. As reported by *In These Times* (see "Pantanal Journey," August 6), the almost 18,000-square-mile area, home to hundreds of rare plant and animal species, will now be protected under an international treaty known as the Ramsar Convention.

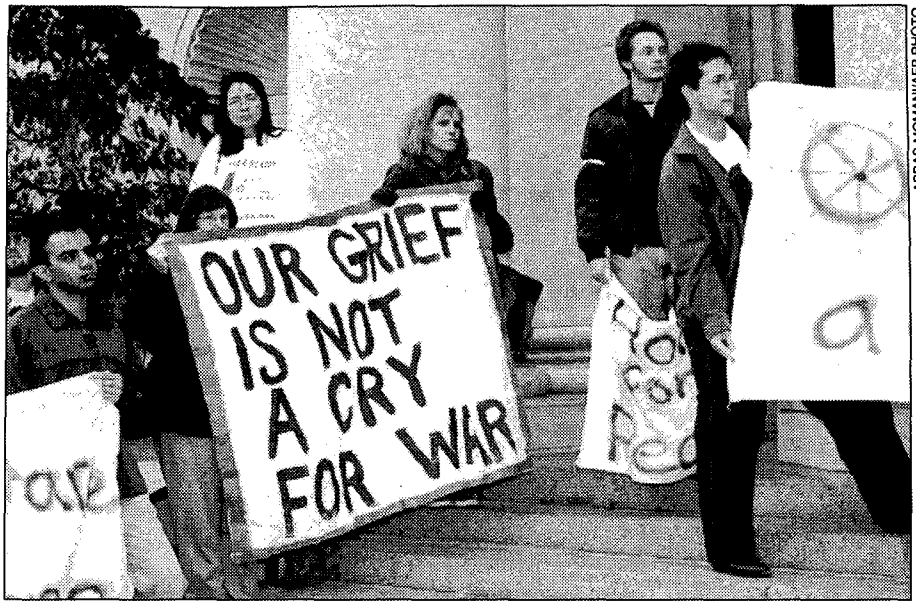
—Kristie Reilly



leyan University student Sarah Norr. Norr was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and interfering with an officer after she cited her constitutional right to free assembly when told by a police officer to clear off the sidewalk. "It was very clear from what the cops were saying as they arrested us that they were angry at us for our beliefs," she says.

Norman Pattis, a New Haven civil liberties attorney representing some of the defendants, described the atmosphere during the bail hearings in court the next day as "scary." "The non-political defendants were muttering that (the protesters) ought to be given 'life,'" he said. "The prosecutors were in high dudgeon, and the bail commissioner said 'these dangerous times' justified the bonds."

Were police actions politically motivated? Police spokesman Lt. Neil Dryfe says "absolutely not." Dryfe says the felony charges were justified, stating there was "violent resistance to being arrested" and defends the bonds, saying, "Bonds of



Protesters in Hartford.

this size for this amount, for people charged in some cases with felonies who do not live locally, is not uncommon." (When I relate this to Pattis, he says, "That's bullshit.")

"There was no violent resistance," Norr says. "The police are trumping up the charges and trying to make it look like a riot in order to justify their actions."

Trials are scheduled for the end of



## They Hate Our Freedom 7.5

The odd stun-gun, knife collection or loaded pistol may slip past the vigilant security professionals at our nation's airports, but not so our most dangerous internal enemies.

Nancy Oden, an official of the Green Party USA who has helped organize anti-war protests, was seized at an airport in Bangor, Maine before she could board an American Airlines flight to Chicago.

According to *Counterpunch*, military personnel armed with automatic weapons surrounded Oden as she tried to get on the plane, saying that her name had been "flagged in the computer." They then advised other airlines that Oden was forbidden to fly until further notice.

## Making Lemonade 5.4

Lloyd's, the London-based insurance giant, estimates that the attacks on the World Trade Center will cost it nearly \$2 billion. And its "names," the investors who back Lloyd's risks with their own assets, are being asked to pony up about \$360 million.

So, are bowler-hatted toffs blowing their brains out in Belgravia? No, sir. According to a report by the BBC, a newsletter for the Association of Lloyd's Members is forthrightly bullish. "Names may now have a historic opportunity for profitable underwriting," the newsletter gushes. All the fear and uncertainty that followed the attacks should only bolster "one of the strongest markets in living memory."

Aviation premiums, the publication notes with satisfaction, were up 400 to 600 percent as a result of the attack, and aviation war rates were hiked by 1,400 percent.

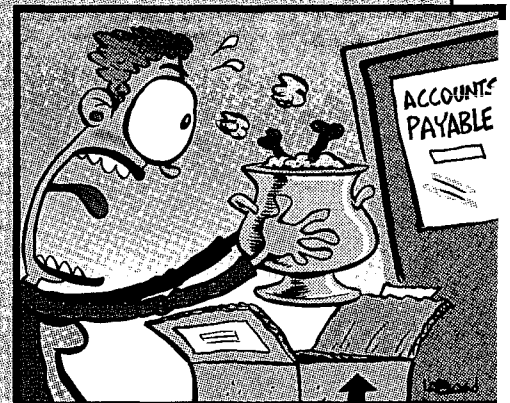
## A Proper Dust-Up 4.7

It took some out-of-the-box persuasion, but the Doubting Thomases at the Sallie Mae Loan Corporation have finally gotten the point. They had been dunning a bereaved mother for months, trying to collect payments on \$35,000 in student loans owed by her dead son. Owed, that is, while he was alive. The deceased, God rest his soul, died in May of a drug overdose. His mother tried

unsuccessfully for months to impress this unfortunate fact on Sallie Mae's bureaucracy.

Finally, in frustration she mailed a sample of the young man's ashes to the company's office. The dusty missive touched off a rolling freak-out at Sallie Mae's Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania office, according to The Associated Press. Certain they had been anthraxed, company officials called in the police and haz-mat teams, and several employees had themselves tested for contamination.

—Dave Mulcahey





November, and defendants are still assembling their legal team and developing strategy. As one says, "Nobody made a violent act of any sort, and we're all equally innocent." Their foremost legal priority is that no protester serve any time in jail.

"As we continue to question what's going on," says Jessie Duvall, another Wesleyan student, "we have to be aware of a probable harsher reaction from both the police and the government." ■

**Hank Hoffman** is a contributing writer for the *New Haven Advocate*. Contributions can be made to the Free Speech Legal Defense Fund, 13 Farview Avenue, Danbury, CT 06810.

## Climate of Fear

### Long Island activist is charged as a "terrorist"

By **Eric Laursen**

NEW YORK—Fallout from the September 11 terrorist attacks hit Long Island's activist community just eight days later when Connor Cash, a member of the island's lively anarchist collective, Modern Times, was charged with aiding terrorists. Cash had already been indicted earlier this year for conspiring to help members of the shadowy Earth Liberation Front torch a suburban housing development—a charge that could put him in prison for decades if convicted (see "Hard Times for Modern Times," May 14).

Friends of Cash worry that the 19-year-old activist could become a political victim in the climate of fear that has developed since the attacks in New York and Washington. They believe the new charge, which could net Cash additional decades in jail, was lodged primarily to induce the public and, later, a jury to regard him as equivalent to the terrorists who carried out the September 11 attacks. The charge was amended just as Congress and the White House were hammering out a new anti-terrorism law that some say will make it easier for federal prosecutors to lodge similar charges of aiding terrorism against activists.

"The new legislation is clearly designed to make it easier to bring people into the sweep of terrorism statutes," says Donna Lieberman, interim director of the New York Civil Liberties Union. "It's drafted in a way that may lead them to be applied to intimidate people who are engaged in perfectly lawful activities."

A local newspaper account cited sources saying the fact that the new indictments came down just on the heels of the terrorist attacks was only a coincidence. But friends of Cash assert that the U.S. Attorney's office had offered several times to let him plead guilty to lesser charges in exchange for information—offers he had refused. "This is a desperate attempt to get him to plead out," one friend, who asked to remain nameless, says of the terrorism indictment. Cash and his attorney, civil rights lawyer Fred Brewington, declined to comment on the case.

The anti-terrorist bill, which passed both houses of Congress and was signed by President Bush in late October, makes it far easier for law enforcement to pin terrorist associations on persons

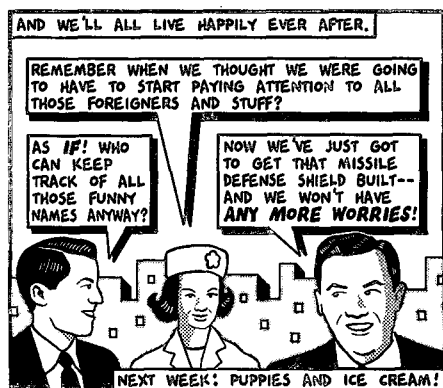
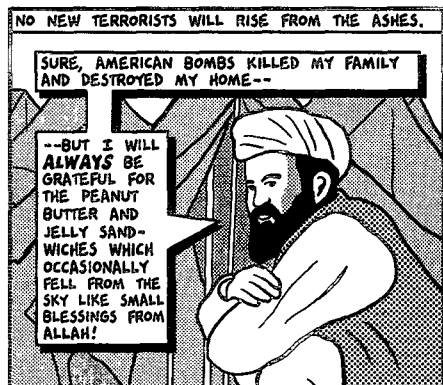
engaged in innocent political activity, according to civil rights lawyers, especially if they were born in another country. A provision that would directly affect cases like Cash's allows the FBI to demand the personal records of any person under investigation for terrorism, including medical and educational records. "Under this provision, the government can apparently go on a fishing expedition and collect information on virtually anyone," says Sen. Russ Feingold (D-Wisconsin), the lone Senate vote against the bill.

Meanwhile, prosecutors' claim that the animal rights movement's "campaign of violent crime" had come to an end when it charged Cash with arson conspiracy earlier this year has been belied by a new campaign on Long Island by the Animal Liberation Front, an ELF offshoot. Last month, the ALF took credit for smashing the windows of a Bank of America office—which was targeted because the bank runs a mutual fund program through Stephens Inc., an investment firm that backs the research giant Huntingdon Life Sciences. No charges have yet been filed in that attack. ■

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

### THIS WEEK: PATRIOTIC OPTIMISM!





# Make a Federal Case Out of It

By Jeff Shaw

Imagine the pressure on Japanese Americans to prove their loyalty to the United States government in the hostile climate following Pearl Harbor.

Now, imagine the pressure on those who challenged the government's authority to confine them and their families to internment camps—people like Fred Korematsu, then a 22-year-old welder living near San Francisco.

Defying the infamous Executive Order 9066, which would remove 120,000 citizens of Japanese descent from the Pacific Coast, Korematsu remained in California. He was arrested on May 30, 1942 and sent to an Oakland jail. The courage he exhibited in that time of virulent fear and hatred would win him the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1998—but at the time, it seemed virtually no one appreciated the efforts of this young Asian-American to defend hard-won constitutional rights.

"In those days, there was no such thing as discrimination," Korematsu says. "They could say anything they wanted about any race, and boy, did they do that with the Japanese. Even the attorney general said bad things about the Japanese."

Alone in his jail cell, Korematsu was surprised to receive a visitor

(because "all my friends were either interned or in the service," he says); Ernest Besig, who was then executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union in northern California. Besig encouraged Korematsu to challenge the legitimacy of his conviction (and, indeed, internment itself) on constitutional grounds.

Besig's visit raised Korematsu's spirits and gave him resolve to fight the government's order. "I thought, 'I'm an American again,'" Korematsu says. "Up to then, I didn't know what I was."

The young Korematsu was one of three Americans to challenge federal detention orders—Portland, Oregon lawyer Minoru Yasui and University of Washington student Gordon Hirabayashi brought separate cases challenging the internment—and his case soon went to the highest court in the land. "In 1944, it went to the Supreme Court, and I thought, 'It's unconstitutional. We can't lose.' And we lost," Korematsu recalls. "In the back of my mind, all the time for 39 years, I was thinking this could happen again."

The government claimed that the order to incarcerate all "those of Japanese ancestry" was a military

necessity due to the inherent disloyalty of Japanese-Americans. Justice Hugo Black wrote for the court that "Korematsu was not excluded ... because of hostility to him or his race"—though no order forced Americans of German or Italian descent to leave their homes. The court completely deferred to the military, agreeing that "they should have the power to do just this" to prevent espionage.

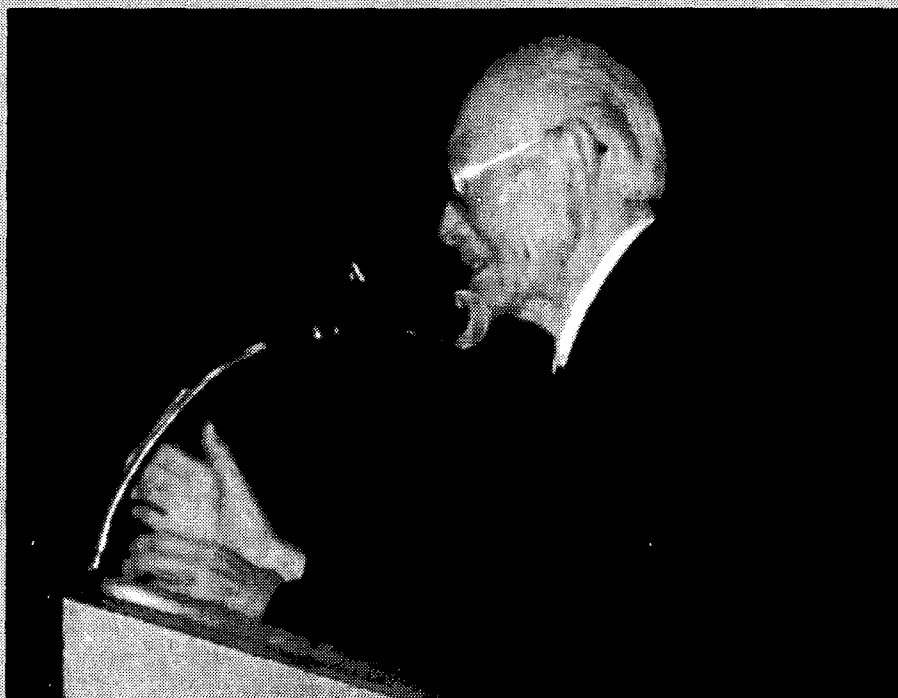
No incident of Japanese-American espionage was ever proven. But Fred Korematsu's conviction stood for nearly four decades after the war. Those 39 long years culminated in a watershed U.S. District Court decision in 1983. Korematsu, Hirabayashi and Yasui each brought a *coram nobis* ("the error before us") petition, a rarely invoked legal doctrine in which the petitioner argues that outrageous and obvious governmental misconduct corrupted an initial conviction.

The *coram nobis* cases saw the district court overturn their convictions. They were significant, but they had one major shortcoming. Because they were heard in a lower court, they did not overturn the Supreme Court precedent—meaning the *Korematsu v. United States* decision justifying internment stands as existing case law.

To many, the man's legacy is his refusal to admit defeat. Lorraine Bannai, an attorney who worked on his *coram nobis* case, calls Korematsu a "symbol of perseverance." Every first-year law student in America studies his famous Supreme Court case for its role in constitutional law.

In 1988, Congress formally apologized for the internment of Japanese-Americans and established a fund to pay reparations to those interned in the camps. But a half century later, Korematsu is aware that racial paranoia has not vanished, and he notes the rising climate of anti-Arab racism as an example. Even at age 82, he remains vigilant against constitutional infringements like the one he and 120,000 others suffered.

"I don't know if it's going to happen again," he says, but if it does, "they'll have a tough fight on their hands. It was unconstitutional then, and it's unconstitutional now. I'm glad that I fought it." ■



Even at 82, Fred Korematsu remains vigilant.



# Kamikaze Capitalists

By Naomi Klein

**W**hat do you call someone who believes so firmly in the promise of salvation through a set of rigid rules that he is willing to risk his own life to spread those rules? A religious fanatic? A holy warrior?

How about a U.S. trade negotiator.

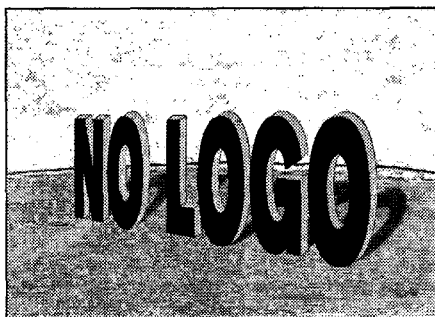
On November 5, the World Trade Organization began its meeting in Doha, Qatar. According to U.S. security briefings, there is reason to believe that al-Qaeda, which has plenty of supporters in the Gulf state, has managed to get some of its operatives into the country, including an explosives specialist. Some terrorists may even have managed to infiltrate the Qatari military.

Given these threats, you might expect the United States and WTO to have canceled their meetings. But not these true believers. Instead, U.S. delegates have been kitted out with gas masks, two-way radios and drugs to combat bioterrorism. As negotiators wrangle over agricultural subsidies, softwood lumber and pharmaceutical patents, helicopters will be waiting to whisk U.S. delegates onto aircraft carriers parked in the Persian Gulf, ready for a Batman-style getaway.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick has praised his delegation for being willing to "sacrifice" in the face of such "undoubted risks." Why are they doing it? Probably for the same reason people have always put their lives on the line for a cause: They believe in a set of rules that promises transcendence. Call it Kamikaze Capitalism.

In this case, the god is economic growth, and it promises to save us from global recession. New markets to access, new sectors to privatize, new regulations to slash—these will get those arrows in the corner of our television screens pointing heavenward once again.

Of course, growth cannot be created at a meeting, but Doha can accomplish something else, something more religious than economic. It can send "a sign" to the market, a sign that growth is on the way and expansion is just around the corner. An ambitious new round of WTO negotiations is the sign they are



praying for. In rich countries like ours, the desire for this sign is desperate. It is more pressing than any possible problems with current WTO rules, problems mostly raised by poor countries, fed up with a system that has pushed them to drop their trade barriers while rich countries kept theirs up.

So it's no surprise that poor countries are this round's strongest opponents. Before they agree to drastically expand the reach of the WTO, many are asking rich countries to make good on their promises from the last round. There are major disputes swirling around tariffs on garments and the patenting of life forms.

The most contentious issue is drug patents: India, Brazil, Thailand and a coalition of African countries want clear language stating that patents can be overridden to protect public health. The United States and Canada are not just resisting—they are resisting even as their own delegates head for Qatar popping discount Cipro, muscled out of Bayer using exactly the kind of pressure tactics they are calling unfair trade practices.

These concerns are not reflected in the draft ministerial declaration, which is why Nigeria has blasted the WTO for being "one-sided" and "disregarding the concerns of the developing and least developed countries." India's WTO ambassador says that the draft "gives the uncomfortable impression that there is no serious attempt to bring issues of importance to developing countries into the mainstream."

These protests have made little impression in Geneva. Growth is the only god at these negotiations, and any measures that could slow profits even slightly—of drug companies, of water companies, of oil companies—are being treated by believers as if they are on the side of the infidels and evildoers.

We are witnessing trade being "bundled" (Microsoft-style) inside the with-us-or-against-us logic of the war on terrorism. "By promoting the WTO's agenda," Zoellick explains, "these 142 nations can counter the revolutive destructionism of terrorism." Open markets, he says, are "an antidote" to the terrorists' "violent rejectionism." (Fittingly, these are non-arguments glued together with made-up words.)

Zoellick has called on WTO member states to set aside their petty concerns about mass poverty and AIDS and to join the economic front of America's war. "We hope the representatives who meet in Doha will perceive the larger stakes," he says.

Trade negotiations are all about power and opportunity, and for Doha's Kamikaze Capitalists, terrorism is just another opportunity to leverage. Perhaps their motto can be: What doesn't kill us will make us stronger. Much stronger. ■

Naomi Klein, whose new column will be appearing in the magazine regularly, can be reached at [www.nologo.org](http://www.nologo.org).



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# Democracy Begins at Home

## The 2000 Election must not be forgotten

By John Nichols

**H**istorians reflecting upon America's rough transition from the 20th to the 21st century will identify two crises on which the nation's future turned. Both will be recalled to have arisen with little warning, to have exposed fundamental flaws in the political, legal and bureaucratic structures of the nation, and to have demanded dramatic responses that would change forever how the United States conducts its affairs. And historians will explain, with the wisdom of time, that it is unnecessary to debate the relative consequence of these two crises; rather, they will argue, it is vital to recognize the clear consequence of both.

One of these crises is, at this critical stage, inescapable. The September 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, and the response to them, have consumed the interest and energy of the nation. The second of these crises, though it too demands dramatic responses, has been shunted aside with such force that political and media elites do not dare address it—for fear the mere mention of the issue will affront a newly stirred patriotic fervor.

The contested presidential election of 2000 has been pushed so far off the national radar that a consortium of media outlets, after spending more than \$1 million to sort through Florida's uncounted ballots in search of a winner, felt no compunctions about delaying revelation of the results for two months in order to avoid the suggestion of disloyalty to a president whose electoral legitimacy remains dubious at best.

A year ago on November 7, a clear plurality of Florida voters joined a plurality of their fellow American voters in going to the polls to elect Democrat Al Gore as their president. Gore's national popular vote win is well documented, but the preferences of Florida voters that should have given him that state's 25 electoral votes and the presidency were obscured by



MICHAEL SMITH/NEWSMAKERS

**Our political and media elites seem to think that Americans are simply too fragile to deal with more than one crisis at a time.**

36 days of partisan machinations from Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris, House Republican Whip Tom DeLay's Izod-clad rioters and the complacent media. When those manipulations proved insufficient, the unprecedented intervention of a Supreme Court controlled by Republican partisans handed George W. Bush the presidency.

Over the ensuing months, industrious journalists, engaged academics and angry citizens have, in piecemeal yet ultimately conclusive fashion, exposed the fallacy of partisan pronouncements about Bush's "mandate." Even if some artificial standards applied in media recounts continue to concede Bush technical victories, the obvious intent of the electorate was otherwise. "There's a pretty clear pattern from these ballots," explains University of California at Irvine political scientist Anthony Salvanto, who conducted some of the first and most exhaustive examinations of contested ballots. "Most of these people went to the polls to vote for Al Gore."

The attention paid to electoral matters in the post-Florida period also has exposed a democratic infrastructure that is in serious disrepair. A General Accounting Office survey of election officials nationwide found that 57 percent of jurisdictions experienced "major problems" in conducting the 2000 election. Yet, one year after that election, with Bush enjoying 90 percent approval ratings, the elite consensus seems to be that



it is no longer appropriate to talk about the crisis, the systemic flaws it exposed or the uncertain "mandate" it produced for Bush. Thomas Mann of the Brookings Institution summed up the official consensus when he said "the window of opportunity has closed" for reform. While there will be continued tinkering with the process—including a bipartisan congressional "compromise" dressed up as reform—calls for a genuine every-vote-must-count system are muffled at best.

So is that the end of it? Have 19 terrorists succeeded where the Supreme Court and the Republican Party could not, in legitimizing the presidency of George W. Bush and delegitimizing forever those who would challenge the result of the most intensely contested American presidential vote since Rutherford B. Hayes stole the White House from Samuel Tilden in 1876? Was faith in the possibility of a meaningful response to the crisis of American democracy extinguished with so many other hopes on September 11?

**A**t the highest level of American inquiry and discourse, the answer is yes. Even before the attacks, Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer responded to a *New York Times* exposé of widespread Republican manipulation of the military-ballot count by arguing, "This election was decided by the voters of Florida a long time ago. And the nation, the president and all but the most partisan Americans have moved on."

Fleischer's "let's not go there" dismissal of questions about the quality of his boss' "mandate" are to be expected. But since September 11, Fleischerism has become bipartisan in scope—as prominent Democrats such as Virginia Rep. Jim Moran have dropped calls for reform to declare, "I feel comfortable with President Bush." An October media survey of 15 top Democratic backers of Gore found not one willing to criticize Bush or the manner in which he was "elected." Even when New York City miscounted thousands of ballots in the October 11 Democratic mayoral runoff—casting into question the result of that already delayed election—few Democrats renewed calls for federally mandated improvements in electoral machinery and counting procedures.

The "news" from the nation's media elites is even less encouraging. What *Washington Post* columnist Howard Kurtz calls "The Story that Devoured the Media" has, indeed, subsumed all other discourse. Television networks cannot be bothered to provide serious coverage of current debates about civil liberties and international trade, let alone examine contentious questions about the legitimacy of the election of the man who is using the current crisis to advance an ambitious social and economic agenda that, on September 10, appeared itself to be in crisis.

No wonder, then, that immediately after September 11, the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and CNN decided to withhold results of the exhaustive review they had commissioned of more than 170,000 rejected Florida ballots. The consortium project was always a dubious endeavor, as it took the counting process out of the context of the election and attempted to establish uniform procedures for ballot review in a state that never embraced such consistency. Yet Gore backers clung to the belief that the evidence of a true Florida result—and the case

for fundamental electoral reform—could be found amid the overvotes and undervotes.

But after September 11, as Dow Jones spokesman Steven Goldstein explained on behalf of the *Journal*, "Our belief is that the priorities of the country have changed, and our priorities have changed." Overseas, where a freer press speaks with a blunter voice, London's *Telegraph* newspaper wrote that "hope for a Gore victory appears to have been sacrificed on the altar of patriotism and a perception that America needs to be led into war by a strong president."

Even as the consortium finally prepared in mid-November to release the results of its study, the signal had been sent: Our political and information elites believe that Americans are simply too fragile to deal with more than one crisis at a time.

**A**nd what of this message? Is it possible that the media mandarins and the disquieted Democratic officials of Washington are right to believe that, after September 11, the American people have little taste for the truth, or even for correction of a corrupted and corrupting electoral system?

For a brief moment following the September 11 attacks, I wondered. Since last spring, I had been at work on a book examining the Florida fight and the Supreme Court intervention that concluded it. After September 11, colleagues in Washington and New York were quick to express their condolences. "Well, that's it for your book," said a congressional Democrat. "Nobody can criticize Bush now." An academic who had taught me more than I needed to know about ballot scanners and touchscreen technologies said, "The anniversary of November 7 was going to make it impossible even for the Republicans to avoid election reform. Now, we'll get nothing. It'll be a footnote."

Wearing my new asterisk of irrelevance, I headed west this fall for a speaking tour that took me to Minneapolis, Boise, Portland and Seattle. And, as is so often the case, I was

## **Was faith in the possibility of a meaningful response to the crisis of American democracy extinguished with so many other hopes on September 11?**

reminded that elite media and political sensibilities may define the parameters of official debate, but they do not define the American discourse. From audiences I had expected to talk only of September 11 came repeated questions about November 7. Sometimes they were tentative. A woman in Boise asked if it was appropriate to bring up the fact that, as she put it, "Bush may be the commander-in-chief but he was not elected president." A lawyer in Portland was more confident: "Bush is handling the war better than I ever

expected, better than Gore would have. But Bush did steal that election."

What I have found on the speaker circuit, on radio shows and in late-night conversations at the back of bookstores is that, war or no, there is a willingness to open the wounds of November 7 to heal what, in so many ways, was an assault on American values and institutions. I should not have been surprised. Since the founding of this country, Americans have proven themselves capable of asking and answering tough questions about their presidents and their democracy in times of war and domestic crisis.

**D**uring the War of 1812, as the British were burning the Capitol, young Henry Clay asserted the authority of Congress over the weak presidency of James Madison, while John Adams and Thomas Jefferson conducted an extended debate about the dangers of an American aristocracy. In the midst of the Civil War, when some Republicans urged him to call off the election of 1864, Abraham Lincoln accepted the schedule, faced challenges within his own party and from a decorated general running as a Democrat—and prevailed. Declaring victory, Lincoln told supporters that conducting a divisive election in a time of war had been "a necessity." "We cannot have free government without free elections," he said. "If the rebellion could force us to forgo or postpone a national election, it might fairly be claimed to have already conquered and ruined us."

But what of a debate about the very quality of the democracy for which Americans are said to be fighting? What if the debate directly challenges the man sitting in the White House? Should this debate not be put aside until a more convenient time?

Alice Paul would tell us not to make that mistake. At the opening of World War I, the women's suffrage movement faced a critical test. Moderates argued that women would win the right to vote only by appearing to be more patriotic than men. But Paul and the radical suffragists of the National Women's Party refused to compromise their demand that President Woodrow Wilson endorse a constitutional amendment granting women equal citizenship. They picketed the White House daily with signs that identified Wilson as a hypocrite for sending American soldiers to "die for democracy" when America was a democracy "in name only."

The women were attacked in the streets, taunted as traitors and branded "Bolsheviks" by the *Chicago Tribune*. Wilson ordered the suffragists arrested. More than 200 were jailed.

Eventually Paul led a hunger strike so embarrassing to Wilson that he was forced to release her in December 1917. Barely one month later, under continued pressure from Paul and her allies, Wilson announced his support for women's suffrage. The next day, the House narrowly endorsed the Susan B. Anthony Amendment. Within three years, women had the vote.

Can a nation sustain more than one debate at a time of war? Can citizens question the legitimacy of their president even as he struggles to respond to domestic and international threats? Can the demand for radical reform be made in a time of uncertainty and fear? Ari Fleischer may say "no," but American history tells us that answer is "yes." This country has never been so fragile that it lacked for patriots capable of defending both its security and its democracy. And, though you see them rarely on television screens and in the halls of Congress, there are millions of American patriots who today recognize that it is possible to be loyal Americans while still asking questions about whether the democracy George W. Bush has spoken of with uncharacteristic eloquence is fully functional.

**A**s the anniversary of November 7 approached, Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-Illinois) stood on the steps of the Supreme Court in Washington to announce plans for a package of electoral reforms—including a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to vote. He was accompanied by top academics, leaders of the NAACP and other reformers, but there were no other members of Congress and few reporters present.

Had Jackson traveled to the rural Midwest, however, I can guarantee he would have encountered a more enthusiastic response from people like the woman who speculated about what would have happened if the terrorist attacks had come on September 11, 2000, and been followed two months later by an inconclusive election result. "You would think someone would be saying that we have to fix this thing before it creates a constitutional crisis we really can't handle," she told me. "Why can't people in Washington see that?"

The answer to that question—as Jackson is the first to note—must take the form of another question: When will we reformers start to demand, without apology, that our political leaders treat November 7 with at least a measure of the seriousness they have accorded September 11? We do not diminish the dead, nor the struggle to protect the living, when we say that this country is strong enough to face tough questions about the legitimacy of its leaders and its democracy even in a time of war and uncertainty. Rather, we prove a national strength and resolve that run deeper than personalities, to the very heart of the American experiment.

Alice Paul would tell us that, in challenging leaders in a time of war to make real their talk of democracy, we practice the truest patriotism. In an oral history, conducted toward the end of her long life, Paul recalled the "radical" sign that stirred so much controversy outside the White House during World War I. It read: "Democracy should begin at home." ■

*John Nichols is the author of Jews for Buchanan: Did You Hear the One about the Theft of the American Presidency? (New Press), a book on the 2000 election debacle.*

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# Democracy Now

## The world needs more ballots, not bullets

By Benjamin Barber

**A** week after the trauma of the terrorist attacks—more successful than even the perpetrators could have hoped for and exacerbated now by attacks with biological weapons—President George W. Bush used the rhetoric of retribution to declare war on terrorism. “We will bring the terrorists to justice,” he told a joint session of Congress, “or we will bring justice to the terrorists.”

The language of justice was appropriate for the U.S. response, but it will remain so only if its meaning is extended from ret-

answers the complaints of those mired in poverty and despair as a result of unregulated global markets and of capitalism uprooted from the humanizing constraints of the democratic nation-state.

Extending democracy to the global market would promise participation and governance to those wishing to join the modern world and take advantage of its economic blessings and opportunities for accountability, participation and governance. At the same time, by securing cultural diversity and a place for worship and faith insulated from McWorld’s cultural monism, democracy can address the anxieties of those who fear secularist materialism and are committed to preserving their cultural and religious distinctiveness.

If democracy is to be the instrument by which the world avoids the stark choice between a sterile cultural monism (McWorld) and a raging cultural fundamentalism (Jihad), neither of which services diversity of civic liberty, then the United States, Britain and their allies will have to open a second civic and democratic front aimed, not against terrorism *per se*, but against the anarchism and social chaos—the economic reductionism and its commercializing homogeneity—that have created the climate of despair and hopelessness that terrorism has so effectively exploited.

A second democratic front in the war on terrorism will be advanced not only in the name of retributive justice and secularist interests, but also in the name of distributive justice and religious pluralism. The democratic front is not a battle to dissuade terrorists from their campaigns of annihilation. Their deeds are unspeakable,

and their purposes can neither be rationalized nor negotiated. When they hijacked innocents and turned civilian aircraft into lethal weapons, these self-proclaimed “martyrs” of faith in truth subjected others to a compulsory martyrdom indistinguishable from mass murder. The terrorists offer no terms and can be given none in exchange. They are looking not for bargains but for oblivion. Justice here can only take the form of extirpation—root, trunk and branch. Yet the military campaign to eliminate terrorists will leave most citizens in the United States and elsewhere on the sidelines, anxiously watching a battle in which they cannot participate and in which fear will dull the appetite for revenge.

The second front, however, engages every citizen with a stake in democracy and social justice whether within nation-states or in the relations between them. It transforms anxious spectators into resolute participants—the perfect antidote to fear. This second civic front in the war on terrorism is more likely to determine the outcome than the first. It will entail a readjudication of north-south responsibilities, a redefinition of the obligations of global capital as it faces the claims of global justice and comity, a repositioning of democratic institutions as they follow markets from the domestic to the international



REUTERS/SUPRI

The banner at this Jakarta McDonald's reads, “In the name of Allah, the merciful and the gracious, McDonald's Indonesia is owned by an indigenous Muslim.”

ributive to distributive justice. The present crisis can be seen as the clash of two sets of forces. On one hand is the force I call “Jihad,” which represents disintegrative tribalism and reactionary fundamentalism. On the other is “McWorld,” which represents integrative modernization and aggressive economic and cultural globalization. This collision between Jihad and McWorld has been brutally accelerated by the interdependence of these two seemingly opposing forces. Democracy, caught between a clash of movements that seem indifferent to the fate of freedom, suffers grievously. It is now clear, as the United States mounts a military offensive against Jihad (understood not as Islam but as militant fundamentalism) that democracy rather than terrorism may be the main victim.

Only the globalization of civic and democratic institutions is likely to offer a way out of the global war between modernity and its critics. For democracy responds both to Jihad and McWorld. It responds directly to the resentments and spiritual unease of those for whom the trivializing and homogenizing of values is an affront to cultural diversity and spiritual and moral seriousness. It also



sector, and a new recognition of the place and requirements of faith in an aggressively secular market society.

To be sure, democracy and the participation it affords will not appease the terrorists, who are scarcely students of globalization's contractual insufficiencies. What can enemies of the modern do but seek to recover the past by annihilating the present? Yet if terrorists cannot themselves be the object of democratic struggle, they swim in a sea of tacit popular support and resentful acquiescence; and these waters—roiling with anger and resentment—prove buoyant to an ideology of violence and mayhem. An environment of despairing rage exists in too many places in the Third World as well as in too many neighborhoods of First World cities, endowing terrorism with a kind of a quasi-legitimacy. It is not terrorism itself but this facilitating environment against which the second-front battle is directed. Its constituents are not terrorists: They are themselves terrified by modernity and its costs; and so they are vulnerable to our meliorative actions. They seek justice not vengeance.

**F**rom Seattle and Prague to Stockholm and Genoa, street demonstrators have protested against the costs of globalization. As French President Jacques Chirac acknowledged after Genoa, 100,000 protesters do not take to the streets unless something is amiss. Yet more media attention has been paid to their theatrics than to the deep problems those actions are intended to highlight.

After September 11, some critics even tried to lump the anti-globalization protesters with the terrorists, casting them as irresponsible destabilizers of world order. But the protesters are the children of McWorld, and their objections are not Jihadic but democratic. Their grievances concern not world order but world disorder, and, if they are a bit foolish in their politics and a little short on solutions, they understand with a sophistication their leaders apparently lack that globalization's existing architecture breeds anarchy, nihilism and violence.

They also know that most of those in the Third World who seem to welcome U.S. suffering are at worst reluctant adversaries, who aim to make clear that they also suffer from violence, even if it is less visible and destroys with greater stealth and over a longer time than the terrorists who slaughtered more than 5,000 in a morning. They do not want to belittle U.S. suffering, but to use its horror to draw attention to their own. How many of these "enemies of McWorld," given the chance, would prefer to enjoy modernity and its blessings if they were not so often the victims of modernity's unevenly distributed costs? It is hypocrisy rather than democracy that is the target of their rage.

Too often for those outside the United States, Europe and Japan, globalization looks like the imperious reach of predominantly U.S. economic power; too often what we understand as opportunities for liberty and prosperity seem to them a rationalization for exploitation and oppression; too often what we call the international order is for them an international disorder. McWorld's neoliberal antagonism to all political regulation in the global sector, to all institutions of legal and political oversight, to all attempts at democratizing globalization and institutionalizing economic justice looks to them like brute indifference to their welfare and their claims for justice.

McWorld celebrates market ideology with its commitment to the privatization of all things public and the commercialization of all things private. Consequently, it insists on total freedom from government interference in the global economic sector. Yet freedom from interference—the rule of private power over public goods—is another name for anarchy. And terror is merely one of the contagious diseases that anarchy spawns.

What was evident to those who, before September 11, suffered the economic consequences of an undemocratic international anarchy beyond the reach of democratic sovereignty was that, while many in the First World benefited from free markets in capital, labor and goods, these same anarchic markets left ordinary people in the Third World largely unprotected. What has become apparent to the rest of us after September 11 is that that same deregulated disorder from which financial and trade institutions imagine they benefit is the very disorder on which terrorism depends.

Just as jobs defy borders in a wage race to the bottom; just as safety, health and environmental standards lack an international benchmark against which states and regions might organize their employment; so, too, anarchistic terrorists with loyalty to no state and accountable to no people range freely across the world. Unlike the United States, the terrorists are

## **In the collision between 'Jihad' and 'McWorld,' democracy rather than fundamentalism may be the main victim.**

happy to acknowledge and exploit the actual interdependence that characterizes human relations in the 21st century. Theirs, however, is a malevolent interdependence in the face of anarchy, an interdependence in which they have learned to use McWorld's weight jujitsu-style against its massive power.

**I**ronically, even as the United States fosters an anarchic absence of sovereignty at the global level, it has resisted the slightest prospect of surrendering its own national sovereignty—whether to NATO commanders, supranational institutions such as the International Criminal Court, or international treaties such as those banning land mines and regulating fossil fuels. Even as the United States launches a military campaign against terrorism surrounded by a prudently constructed coalition, it makes clear it prefers "coalitions" to "alliances" because it wants to be able to target objectives, develop strategy and wage war free of the need to persuade allies of the wisdom of its intentions.

Yet terrorism has already made a mockery of sovereignty. What was the hijacking of airliners, the calamitous razing of the World Trade Center towers, the brash attack on the Pentagon, but an obliteration of U.S. sovereignty?

Terrorism is the negative and depraved form of that interdependence which, in its positive and beneficial form, we too often refuse to acknowledge. As if still in the 19th century, the United States has persuaded itself that its options are either to preserve an ancient and blissfully secure independence, or to

yield to a perverted and compulsory interdependence that puts foreigners and alien international bodies such as the United Nations or the World Court in charge of U.S. destiny. In truth, however, Americans have not enjoyed a real independence since before the great wars of the previous century—certainly not since the appearance of AIDS and the West Nile virus, of global warming and an ever more porous ozone layer, of a job “mobility” that has obliterated the U.S. industrial economy and of restive speculators who have made “capital flight” a more “sovereign” reality than any conceivable government oversight.

Interdependence is not some foreign adversary against which citizens need to muster resistance. It is a domestic reality that has already compromised the efficacy of citizenship in scores of unacknowledged and uncharted ways. It was the interdependence of the United States with the world, and the interdependence of shared economic and technological systems everywhere, on which the Jihadic warriors counted when they terrorized the United States in September. They not only hijacked America’s air-transportation system, they also provoked the nation into shutting down the system for almost a week. They not only destroyed the cathedral of U.S. capitalism at the World Trade Center, they also forced capitalism to close its markets and shocked the country into deep recession.

How can any nation claim independence under these conditions? In Andrew Jackson’s premodern, rural America, where communities existed in isolation, where there was no national system of transportation or communication, there was genuine independence, and systematic terror was simply not an option: There was no system. But today there is so much systemic interactivity, so highly integrated a global network, so finely tuned an integral communications technology, that it has become as easy to paralyze it as to use it.

Hence, the decision faced by would-be sovereign peoples today is not the felicitous choice between secure independence and an unwanted interdependence. It is only the sobering choice between, on the one hand, a relatively legitimate and democratic and useful interdependence, which is still to be constructed and will leave sovereignty in tatters; and, on the other hand, a radically illegitimate and undemocratic interdependence on the terms of criminals, anarchists and terrorists, which is already here and will triumph in the absence of a democratizing political will.

In short, we can allow either McWorld and Jihad—Hollywood cowboys and international desperadoes—to set the terms of interdependence; or we can leave those terms to transnational treaties, new global democratic bodies, and a new creative common will. We can have our interactivity dictated to us by violence and anarchy, or we can construct it on the model of our own democratic aspirations. We can have a democratic and useful interdependence on whatever common ground we can persuade others to stand on, or we can stand on the brink of anarchy and try to prevent criminals and terrorists from pushing us into the abyss.

In the long term, we cannot defeat terror by war alone because violence cannot defeat fear: Only democracy can do that. ■

**Benjamin Barber** is *Kekst Professor of Civil Society at the University of Maryland and the author of Jihad vs. McWorld, a new edition of which is being published this month by Ballantine, as well as The Truth of Power: Intellectual Affairs in the Clinton White House (W.W.Norton). A version of this essay originally appeared in the Financial Times.*

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# Cracks in the Coalition

## The rest of the world begins to sour on the war

By Doug Ireland

**T**he good news is that a serious debate about the war is finally happening in this country. The bad news is that it's coming from the right.

On the op-ed page of the October 30 *Washington Post*, twin columns by *Weekly Standard* editor Bill Kristol and syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer flayed the Bush administration for being insufficiently warlike. Krauthammer thundered that the war is being "fought with half-measures ... to satisfy the diplomats rather than the generals. ... This is no time for restraint and other niceties. This is a time for righteous might." Kristol accused Bush of having a "failing strategy" based on "three self-imposed constraints: No ground troops in Afghanistan. No confrontation with Iraq. No alarm at home."

Just days before, both the increasingly blood-thirsty John McCain and former Democratic National Chairman Chris Dodd declaimed on the Sunday talk shows about the need for a massive invasion of Afghanistan with American soldiers. On the one-month anniversary of the beginning of the bombing of Afghanistan, TV's retired generals, from the omnipresent Wesley Clark to Barry McCaffrey (whose gleeful descriptions of the malign effects U.S. weaponry can visit on its targets are truly stomach-turning), added to the cacophony for ground troops. (Even celebrity lickspittle Liz Smith has joined the clamor, using her gossip column to call for going to war "with energy and will to win ... let's get this war on!")

The chorus demanding the widening of the war to Iraq is growing. *New York Times* columnist William Safire has suggested using Turkey, a Muslim country, as our political cover in the invasion of Iraq by partitioning the country and giving Istanbul the oil-rich northern half. And while Secretary of State Colin Powell reiterated that the United States has no immediate intention of extending America's war to other countries, he pointedly added the words "at the moment."

The Taliban are not cooperating with Bush's serial strategy of knocking off Afghanistan first before moving on Baghdad. Leaks from the top British military command (the Brits know just how tough their former satrapy can be from bloody experience) say that the campaign in Afghanistan could take "three or four years." Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has now come close to admitting as much, having told a press conference that defeating the Taliban would take "months" but quickly adding with a sly snigger that this could mean "23 months."

Bush's personal popularity so far is undiminished. A Gallup poll taken to mark the first anniversary of his election showed



Hey Tony, where's everybody going?

that if the Bush-Gore contest were replayed today, Bush would cream his former opponent by 2-to-1. And support for the war remains high, even on college campuses: A recent Harvard poll found that 79 percent of students support the bombing of Afghanistan.

**A**mong our European allies in Bush's "crusade" against "evil," however, public support for the militarization of the campaign against terrorism is rapidly evaporating. "The Conduct of the War Alarms Europe," was the banner headline in the October 31 *Le Monde*. In France, support for the war has dropped to 46 percent. Despite Tony Blair's bellicosity, 54 percent of Britons now favor a halt to the bombing. In Italy, 55 percent are against sending ground troops to Afghanistan (and one in four says that American foreign policy provides some justification for the September 11 attacks). Even in Greece, where anti-Islamic feelings run high because of that country's long confrontational history with Turkey, a majority now oppose America's bombing.

What's driving down support for the war in Europe? There, a daily diet of TV images extensively portraying the civilian casualties of U.S. bombing reinforces revulsion at an air campaign that has yet to force the Taliban to retreat a single inch. The video of the carnage of children (inevitable in bombing Afghanistan, where nearly half the population is under 15), women and the elderly is seen only fleetingly on U.S. TV screens, thanks to the self-censorship of our networks—which prefer running endless hours of sanitized footage provided by the Pentagon, taken from on high and purporting to show the "accuracy" of our bombs. *NBC Nightly News*

recently performed the remarkable feat of running a long report on the reaction to the bombing among Muslims in the Middle East that showed the horror on their faces as crowds watched their TVs—but only allowed the tapes of the civilian casualties that inspired the angry despair a few flickering seconds on American screens.

Islamic voices raising coherent objections to the bombing get infinitely more attention in Europe than they do here. Consider just one example: Mohammed Sayeed Tantawi, grand imam of Cairo's al-Azar mosque, the highest authority in Sunni Islam and one of the most eminent moderates in the Muslim world. This revered figure was one of the first *ulemas* to condemn the September 11 attacks, which he characterized as "a monstrous crime condemnable by all revealed religions." When, on October 29, he at last spoke out against the bombing of Afghanistan—"aggression against noncombatants is unacceptable, just punishment should be applied to the criminals and not to an entire people," he said—it was major news in Europe (and the Middle East), but you could scan our papers and fail to find a single line alluding to his perfectly sensible declarations.

Europeans who initially supported the war have now turned against it. Typical is Jean-Francois Kahn, editor of the influential centrist French newsmagazine *Marianne*, who wrote on October 28: "The world is on fire, and a just war—conducted in a catastrophic and morally repugnant way—is now reinforcing the appeal of the monster against whom it was originally launched. Cut off one of bin Laden's tentacles, and three more grow in its place."

The increasing contempt with which Europeans are regarding the war is even beginning to leak from the lips of normally cautious diplomats. European Union foreign minister Javier Solana, who was America's lapdog when he was NATO secretary-general during the war against Slobodan Milosevic, recently told *Le Monde* that America has its priorities wrong, with Afghanistan first and the Middle East second, "while for us it's the reverse." Under public pressure, European political leaders now parading through the White House (with the exception of Blair and Italy's fascist-allied *cavaliere* Silvio Berlusconi, a foreign policy ignoramus) are agitating behind the scenes for more attention to a political solution to the Afghanistan problem, and thus to the al-Qaeda menace.

But as America is becoming increasingly isolated in world public opinion, Bush's answer is not to re-examine the consequences of militarizing what should have been a planetary law-enforcement campaign against the hydra-headed terrorist networks. No, Bush sets up a propaganda "war room" with branches in London and Islamabad and hires a Madison Avenue powerhouse, Charlotte Beers—previously occupied with such weighty matters as making a bestseller out of Head N' Shoulders shampoo—as undersecretary of state for public diplomacy. The notion that America's war is fast losing global support because of a marketing failure is simply risible.

Meanwhile, the American public is being fed a steady diet of lies to cover up the fact that the political objectives of the war in Afghanistan are as murky as ever. If our goal is to topple the Taliban, as Bush has proclaimed, then why haven't we provided serious support for Hamid Karzai, the leader of a powerful Pashtun clan who is the most prominent anti-Taliban figure with support in Southern Afghanistan since the troops of Mullah Omar assassinated Abdul Haq? On the same day that Rumsfeld told his regular press conference that Karzai had been extracted from Afghanistan at his own request and his troops resupplied, ABC *World News Tonight*

ran a satellite phone interview with the Pashtun leader who said from Afghanistan that he'd never left the country but "had stayed with [his] men," whom, he complained, were still without food, footwear or winter clothing.

Almost every day, the Pentagon claims to have unleashed the "heaviest bombing to date" on Taliban troops; and almost every night, writer Sebastian Junger—on assignment for Ted Koppel's *Nightline*—reports that from his frontline vantage point with the

Northern Alliance he can see that the Taliban troops are being deliberately spared from the bombing-for-show, which produces lovely lines of billowing smoke for the American networks but destroys no more than empty redoubts and the occasional tank. That's the sort of thing that is intensifying the demand for a full-scale, widened war here at home. How long will Bush be able to resist the public pressure to dramatically shorten his military timetable?

Meanwhile, of the 1,147 people sequestered here at home since September 11, not a single one has been charged with involvement in the airplane hijackings or the anthrax letters. Thanks to some enterprising journalists—the *San Francisco Chronicle's* William Carlsen and the *Los Angeles Times's* Richard Serrano deserve special mention—we know that many of those jailed are being held in isolation, subject to beatings from guards and prisoners, and moved from state to state to hide them from their families, their lawyers (if they've been permitted to contact any) and their embassies. A *Washington Post* survey of 235 detainees the paper's reporters were able to track shows that most of them have only the slimmest—if any—alleged connection to support for terrorism and are being held (as a Justice Department official admitted anonymously) in "preventive detention," whose principal objective seems to be to frighten other Muslims here in the United States.

But that's not enough for the likes of *Newsweek's* Jonathan Alter, who penned a November 5 column, "Time To Think about Torture," advocating the use of techniques like those employed by the Israeli Mossad. The longer the war goes on, the more we will hear cries to descend to the moral level of the "evil" we claim to be targeting. And no amount of detergent-style marketing will be able to wash that stain from our national honor when the garrison state becomes a full-blown reality. We are already well on our way. ■

**The longer the war goes on, the more we will hear cries to descend to the moral level of the "evil" we claim to be targeting.**



# ABORTION UNDER ATTACK

By Eleanor J. Bader

**S**ince mid-October, more than 250 of the country's 4,500 reproductive health clinics have received letters containing a powdery substance and a message saying, "You have been exposed to anthrax." Tests revealed all the letters to be hoaxes, but reproductive health clinics have been dealing with the threat of chemical attacks for years. They're just one front in the terror that strikes abortion clinics all the time.

And it's getting worse. Under the Bush administration, clinicians across the nation report that anti-abortion protests have become increasingly violent. Indeed, since 44-year-old Clayton Waagner escaped from Illinois county jail last February, clinic personnel have been on high alert. Waagner was jailed for casing abortion clinics in a stolen van loaded with guns, and a letter written in June and posted on a pro-life Virginia Web site spells out his agenda. "Anyone who works at an abortion location or Planned Parenthood are targets [sic]. It doesn't matter to me if you're a nurse, receptionist, book-keeper or janitor, if you work for the murderous abortionist I'm going to kill you." The letter went on to note that he had the names and home addresses of 42 clinic staff people. An October 10 addendum included the following words: "I am an abortionist-bomber, that's what I do."

Vigilance has always been necessary at reproductive health centers. Still, some periods are clearly worse than others. Since George W. Bush took office in January, "health centers around the country report that anti-choice activities outside their offices have increased," says Vicki Saporta, executive director of the Washington-based National Abortion Federation (NAF). "Both the number of activities and the intensity of activities are up. We're hearing that protesters are more vocal, louder, more in the patients' faces than they used to be."

**N**eal Horsley is a particularly good example. The Georgia-based anti-abortionist is already notorious as the creator of the Nuremberg Files, a Web site listing sever-

al hundred people "wanted for crimes against humanity." The list uses black ink for practitioners working in the reproductive health field and gray for those who have been wounded; abortion providers who have been murdered appear with a bold black line through their names. Now, the fanatic has crafted [abortioncams.com](http://abortioncams.com), a Web site he promises will "ram the images of the babies being slaughtered into the minds of every citizen in the nation."

The site allows anyone with Internet access to view women in 21 states as they enter or leave reproductive health facilities. Horsley is even cobbling together a nationwide "news crew" to videotape patients, and is aiming to air the footage on local cable access stations across the country. "Ask yourself this," Horsley explains on the site. "Would you be more or less likely to go and kill your baby if you knew there was a possibility your picture might be published in a place where your friends and family and the whole world might see it? A mother worthy of the name has to be prepared to resist the evil forces that would tempt her to kill her child, or she must suffer the consequences."

Not surprisingly, clinic workers have gone to court to stop the site. In early September, the pro-choice community won a small victory when an Illinois judge ruled that photos posted on several sites of a woman being taken to the hospital from a clinic in Granite City were an unlawful invasion of privacy. The woman had suffered a cervical tear during a second trimester abortion. In his ruling, Judge George J. Moran demanded that three anti-abortion

## OBSTACLE COURSE

Millions of women have an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy each year in America, but only a million have an abortion. The difficult journey getting there might explain why.

### STEP 1 Finding an abortion provider

A whopping 86 percent of all American counties (and 95 percent of rural counties) have no abortion provider at all. Only about 700 hospitals across the United States provide abortions, and the majority of those perform less than 30 a year.

### STEP 2 Parental consent

What if your parents don't want you to have an abortion, or you're afraid to tell them? Thirty states require minors to get their parents' or a judge's permission before getting an abortion (Idaho and Utah, however, don't allow them to go to a judge at all).

### STEP 3 Reaching a doctor

If you live in a state like North Dakota or Nebraska, you might have to travel up to 700 miles to get to the nearest abortion provider.

groups—abortioncams.com, Missionaries to the Unborn and Operation Save America—remove the pictures and medical records of “Jane Doe,” as well as information about Dr. Yogendra Shah, from the Internet.

The most extreme faction of the anti-abortion movement has consistently wrought havoc on clinics, clinic workers and patients. According to the NAF, during the first eight months of 2001, clinics have endured an onslaught of attacks: one bombing; two arsons; two attempted arsons; four burglaries; 14 bomb threats; 91 disruptions, including harassing telephone calls and hate mail; and 59 incidents of trespassing and vandalism. Clinic employees also have informed the NAF of three death threats, two instances of assault and battery, and five incidents of stalking, while more than 2,900 picket lines are on record. The frontal attack on abortion—screaming picketers, legislation to restrict access on the state, federal and international levels, even the imprisonment of Dr. James Pendergraft, a Florida provider sentenced to 46 months in federal prison on trumped-up extortion charges—suggests a bleak future for proponents of reproductive rights.

**W**hile organizations like Operation Save America (formerly Operation Rescue), Missionaries to the Unborn and the Army of God engage in acts of violence, groups like the National Right to Life Committee and the American Life League have been pushing a far-flung legislative agenda that chips away at the right to choose. Emboldened by the president’s signing of a “global gag rule” on his first day in office—the rule bans U.S. funding to international groups that lobby to keep or make abortion legal, as well as to those that provide abortion services, counseling or referrals—these anti-abortionists are hoping to take advantage of Bush’s stated commitment to the cause.

Although the anti-abortion movement’s legislative wish-list is extensive, three bills represent the worst of their attacks on abortion and will probably remain on the front-burner for years to come:

The Unborn Victims of Violence Act attempts to equate a zygote with an adult woman by allowing a person who injures

## NOW THE GOOD NEWS

Despite an upsurge in anti-abortion rhetoric and protest, there are glimmers of good news amid the bad:

- A federal court in Indiana struck down a state law mandating that women seeking abortions receive in-person counseling at least 18 hours before terminating a pregnancy. The court ruled that the “two-trip requirement” imposed “an undue burden on a woman’s right to choose abortion.”
- Despite George W. Bush’s ardent pleas to remove contraceptives from the medical services federal employees can purchase with their health insurance, Congress did not cave. Federal workers can still use their health coverage for this essential service.
- The First Circuit Court in Boston ruled that a Massachusetts law banning anti-abortion protesters from coming within six feet of clinic workers and patients does not violate free speech. The federal court also sanctioned an 18-foot buffer zone at the entrance of all state abortion facilities.
- The Alaska Supreme Court ruled that the state cannot fund pregnancy-related services for low-income women without also allowing them to use their

Medicaid coverage for medically necessary abortions. Judge Dana Fabe based her decision on the state constitution’s “equal protection” guarantee.

- California became the second state in the nation (after Washington) to give pharmacists the green light to dispense the “morning after” pill without a prescription. The pill reduces the chances of pregnancy by more than 75 percent if taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex. More than 60 groups, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, lauded the decision.

—Eleanor Bader

or kills an “unborn baby” while committing a federal crime to be charged with two offenses. The bill, introduced in the Senate by Mike DeWine (R-Ohio), was drafted by the National Right to Life Committee and has already passed the House. President Bush applauded its passage, calling the bill an affirmation of America’s “commitment to a culture of life.” But the bill is only another canny, manipulative legislative strategy on the part of the anti-abortion movement, says Susan E. Davis, a longtime New York reproductive rights activist. “It opens the door to criminalizing abortion by sanctifying the life of a fetus—it’s outrageous.”

The Child Custody Protection Act has been dubbed the “Teen Endangerment Act” by groups like the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL). A hearing on the bill, which would criminalize anyone other than a parent assisting a young woman in crossing state borders to obtain an abortion—thereby bypassing her home state’s restrictive parental consent or notification laws—was held in the House in September. NARAL spokesman William Lutz told *In These Times* that he expects HR 476 to pass; the bill has not yet been introduced in the Senate.

### STEP 4 Getting into the clinic

Although FACE, the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances law (signed by President Clinton), made it illegal to block entrances to a clinic, protesters are likely to hassle you anyway: 2,900 picket lines—one or more for each reproductive health clinic in the country—have already been reported this year.

### STEP 5 Paying for an abortion

Even if you’re on Medicaid, 19 states will help women pay for abortions only when her health is at stake. Only 14 states voluntarily pay for abortions for Medicaid recipients.

### STEP 6 Waiting

You’re not there yet: 24 states require “counseling” before you’re permitted to undergo the procedure. New Jersey, for example, requires 24 *hours* of counseling before you can have an abortion. And if you live in one of the 16 states that enforce “mandatory waiting period” laws, you may have to come back tomorrow and repeat any number of these steps all over again.

—Jordan Levinson



Lastly, anti-abortion groups are working hard on a bill called the RU-486 Patient Health and Safety Protection Act. Aimed at restricting the distribution of mifepristone (an abortifacient that can be used during the first seven weeks of pregnancy), the bill seeks to bar doctors who do not perform surgical abortions from prescribing the drug. On the face of it, the claim that the bill will protect women by ensuring that dispensing physicians are trained to handle complications seems rational. Yet NARAL, Planned Parenthood and the NAF believe the concern is disingenuous. What really rangles opponents, according to Planned Parenthood's Web page, is the fact that "mifepristone can be dispensed in the anonymity of a doctor's office, clinic or hospital, away from the jibes of Right to Life picketers." Since November 2000, more than 5,000 women have obtained the drug from Planned Parenthood; the pill's success rate has been 99 percent. "The president is on record as opposing mifepristone," Lutz says; he expects this bill to pass too.

"The House is clearly anti-choice. Bush is anti-choice, and the Senate is a very close call," adds Ron Fitzsimmons, executive director of the National Coalition of Abortion

Providers. In the current climate, he says, "Bills that appear reasonable, like the Unborn Victims of Abortion Act or the Child Custody Protection Act, are discussed in simplistic terms or reduced by the Republicans to sound bites—when, in reality, these issues are complicated and nuanced.

"The problem is that we're on the defensive. We're spread very thin, fighting this or that bill and getting geared up for a Supreme Court nomination fight. It's a question of how many things can you deal with at one time."

So what's to be done? Bob Jaffe, deputy director of New York NARAL, says, "We need to recognize that the political environment we're in makes it easier to implement policies that make it harder for women to exercise their right to abortion. We have a responsibility to make sure that money reaches family planning clinics, that Medicaid is protected so poor women can still get reproductive health care. But we also need to remember this: More than a million American women will choose to have an abortion this year." ■

**Eleanor J. Bader** is the co-author of *Targets of Hatred: Anti-Abortion Terrorism* (St. Martin's Press).

## GAGGED IN CAMBODIA

By Bill Myers

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA—Heng Satha didn't really know about abortion until she was in high school, and a friend died from a botched procedure. "We didn't discover her pregnancy until she was dead," Heng says.

Years later, working as a midwife and doctor's assistant in refugee camps near the Thai border, she would learn plenty, trying to save mangled, dying women from abortions gone bad.

"I saw many cases of ruptured uteruses. I can't remember how many, but it was a lot," she says. One woman came into a camp hospital with an abortionist's broken metal prong still jutting out of her cervix. "But she was still alive," Heng recalls, shaking her head. It was these experiences that led Heng to campaign for legal and safe abortions in her country, even though "there were times when I felt I was the only one."

Heng, 45, won half the battle in 1997, when Cambodia legalized abortion, but the other half—making abortions safe—is still underway. "Frankly, I'm a Catholic," she says, adjusting her yellow-tinted glasses. "But we have to think about women's health."

But now the small gains in women's health in this and many other underdeveloped nations are at risk, thanks to President Bush's gag order. The order, signed on Bush's second day in office, prohibits funding to overseas groups that provide abortion counseling.

But while it helps Bush score points with a tiny but shrill constituency of contributors, the gag order jeopardizes poor women's lives, undermines poor countries' health care systems and insults the intelligence of patients and providers. Health providers in this country and the world over do not just focus on abortion, but provide total reproductive health. To reduce funding for any reason jeopardizes these efforts, activists say.

"It's very difficult to talk with our clients," says one aid worker, who spoke on condition of anonymity because her group depends on U.S. funding. Because of the gag order, some health professionals are reduced to schemes to provide "unofficial" information, like taking women somewhere else to offer counseling, the aid worker said. "As a health provider, it's a constraint."

Cambodia now is an especially worrisome scene. The HIV and AIDS rate is among the highest in the world outside of sub-Saharan Africa; infant mortality is around 10 percent; and pregnancy-related deaths are among the highest in the world. Cambodia cannot afford any cutbacks in reproductive health whatsoever.

Public health "doesn't exist on a national basis," says Regine Seer of Pharmacists without Frontiers. "You have small groups like ours, so the information is really very limited. Here, abortion is used as a form of contraception."

But if anti-choice zealots think they can restrict information even more with the gag order, they are dead wrong. Most Cambodian women can not afford, or even find, safe abortions. They restrict themselves to "traditional" midwives—who, for around \$2.50, fumble along a woman's abdomen with their fingers, trying to snap the fetus' neck—or the ominous "Chinese Pill," a homemade abortifacient that induces bleeding, sometimes to the point of hemorrhaging.

No one knows for sure how many women turn to these dangerous methods, but Heng Satha and others say the number is sky-high. "Most women do it in their communities because it is cheaper," she says.

The picture inside most hospitals here is not much better. Last year alone, at least 2,000 women died from botched abortions in government-run clinics. According to Dr. Bill Pigott of the World Health Organization, for every 100,000 live births in Cambodia, 437 women die from pregnancy-related deaths, which include botched abortions. The United States, by comparison, sees 9.1 deaths per 100,000 live births. "The gag order is sure to have an effect because it sends a message that we will only fund you if you do it our way," Pigott says. "I don't think Cambodia and other poor countries have the luxury to tell other countries to go away."

**Bill Myers** writes from Phnom Penh, where he is a reporter for the Cambodia Daily.



# HUGO IS BOSS

But Chavez's 'revolution' faces many obstacles

By John Marshall and Christian Parenti

Caracas

From the 23rd-story offices of the Venezuelan Ministry of Planning, the slums can be seen stretching out across the verdant mountainsides and far into the distance. Equally clear, on the highway just below, are the swank SUVs of the upper classes, streaming out of town and back to their gated redoubts. Inside the office, the walls are covered from floor to ceiling with dry-erase boards and butcher paper illustrating elaborate visions of an alternative future.

"We're trying to have a revolution with the enemy inside," explains Enrique Vila, a poet, professor, artist and now a leading planner in Venezuela's populist government. "It's not easy." Vila is in charge of building a series of large, experimental, economically self-sufficient, ecologically sustainable rural communities, complete with local currencies and organic farming—the kind of thing most Berkeley anarchists only dream about.

But Vila's planned communities are just one example of a broader, frequently overlooked social experiment that began here with the election of President Hugo Chavez in late 1998. Attacked by the American right as a military thug—his first bid at power was a failed coup attempt in 1992—Chavez remains something of an enigma. Is he a populist blowhard, talking tough but doing little? An old-school Marxist, minus the Soviet subsidies? A far-left authoritarian, waiting to blossom? Or a doomed balcony socialist in the tradition of Peru's Gen. Juan Velasco or Panama's Omar Torrijos?

Or, perhaps most interesting, how is it that Chavez and his posse haven't learned the famous Thatcherite lesson: "There Is No Alternative"?

Since taking office, Chavez has done more than just hire bohemian planners. His "Bolivarian Revolution"—named for Simon Bolivar, the 19th-century South American liberator—has ratified a new constitution, abolished Venezuela's plutocratic upper house and overhauled the country's corrupt judiciary. His party, the MVR (or Fifth Republic Movement), also has won big in congressional, state and local elections. More important for the impoverished majority, Chavez has reined in inflation, boosted growth rates, beefed up social spending, launched a massive public works program and clamped down on tax evasion.

On the international front, Chavez has been just as daring. He has brought Venezuela closer to Fidel Castro—swapping Venezuelan oil for Cuban doctors and sports instructors—and has sharply criticized the policies of "savage neoliberalism" imposed on Latin America by the United States. Chavez has even withdrawn the Venezuelan military from regional naval exercises in the Caribbean and denied the U.S. military access to Venezuelan airspace, thus hampering Washington's proxy war in Colombia. Most recently, he has criticized U.S. bombing of Afghanistan as "fighting terrorism with terrorism."

Chavez's trump card is oil: Venezuela has the largest petroleum reserves outside the Middle East and is the largest U.S.



Chavez has sharply criticized the policies of "savage neoliberalism."

source of gasoline and heating oil. Petroleum revenues account for a third of Venezuela's economic activity and three-quarters of its exports. Oil also pays for Chavez's redistributive social projects and gives little Venezuela major clout on the world stage. Through the efforts of its former minister of energy and mines, Ali Rodriguez (a former Marxist guerrilla turned statesman), Venezuela has led a revitalization of OPEC, which in turn has boosted the price of crude oil from \$8 a barrel to as high as \$35 a barrel.

The government knows how to play chess. I am trying to teach them how to play Go," says Vila, referring to the Chinese board game in which a player attempts to surround and absorb his opponent's pieces rather than strike and remove them. The metaphor helps explain the whole Bolivarian project, which aims to develop some sort of semi-socialist mixed economics without alienating the private sector.

In practical terms, that means diversifying and restructuring a distorted and oil-fixated economy in which 80 percent of all food and consumer goods are imported. According to government and international figures, 45 percent of Venezuelans are marginally employed in the "informal economy"; 80 percent are defined as "poor"; half of those are "critically poor," meaning they can't afford an adequate diet. Thus, the immediate task of the Chavez government has been to redistribute wealth and services down the social hierarchy by beefing up services, creating jobs for the poor and making the rich pay higher taxes.



At the same time, the Chavistas want to redistribute population and investment more evenly across the country. "We're not talking about forcing anyone out of cities," Vila says, "but rather about attracting them back to the countryside with economic opportunities." Sixty percent of the nation's capital is currently invested in a narrow coastal belt around Caracas. As a result, 85 percent of the population has concentrated in the city and a handful of other northern coastal urban centers. Vila's planned communities—the largest will house 3,400 people—are prototypes of what a more balanced and sustainable form of development might look like.

Thanks to consultation with regular Venezuelans, the visionary settlements will also be pragmatic. "This will be cooperative living, not utopian collectivism," Vila says. Toward that end, the settlements are composed of individual, private homes with familial land plots for subsistence crops, such as yucca and beans. But there will also be larger communally owned parcels for producing cash crops such as melons, oil palms and livestock. Much of the community's waste will be recycled in state-of-the-art "biodigesters," producing fertilizer and biogas fuel. The goal, Vila says, is to create a zero-pollution "circular metabolism."

Politically and educationally, the communities are designed to be relatively autonomous and self-governing with decision-making councils that ascend from the level of the neighborhood to the community as a whole. Most of the families, all of whom are now marginally housed and willing to participate in such an experiment, have already been chosen. The first settlers are due to move in at the end of this year. But the communities are still under construction; their layouts look like dusty crop circles in the jungle.

Meanwhile, Chavez is proceeding in more traditional ways. Last year the government created a thousand "Bolivarian Schools," which provide students with additional hours of instruction and two hot meals a day. Teachers' salaries were doubled, and public schools were forbidden from charging parents "supplementary fees." As a result, primary school enrollment increased by a million students. The goal for 2001 is to convert 3,000 more schools to the Bolivarian model and to keep the school kitchens open throughout the summer.

The rather backward, USAID-inspired curriculum too is being overhauled. Leading the educational revamp is a Marxist sociologist and former guerrilla named Carlos Lanz. He wants a curriculum that teaches Venezuelans to reject "individualism and competitiveness" and the "concentration of property among few people, classes or social layers." But the schools have been derided in the U.S. press as milita-

**The Chavistas hope to attract people back to the countryside from overcrowded cities like Caracas.**

rized brainwashing academies and denounced by critics at home as a sign of creeping "Cubanization."

The government also has quadrupled spending on health care, is constructing rural clinics, and now provides free emergency care in Venezuela's public hospitals. The state funds a nationwide chain of subsidized pharmacies called SUMED, where drugs sell for 30 to 40 percent below market prices. Similarly, the military has created subsidized "popular markets" in which soldiers with otherwise idle military vehicles are sent into the countryside to buy produce from farmers, transport it to towns and cities, then sell it at below cost to small vendors who pass on a 30 percent savings to consumers.

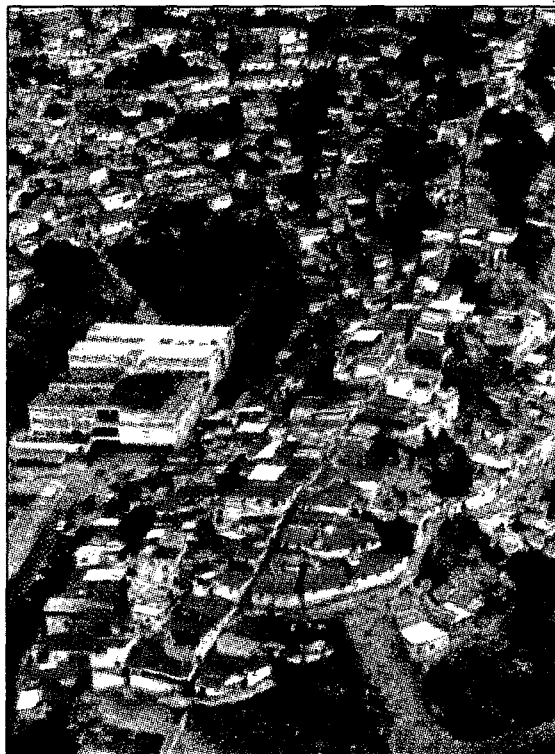
To deal with unemployment, the government is attempting to create 100,000 new jobs through "civic-military production units," in which soldiers and civilians work together on road-building, forest restoration and agricultural projects. At times the role of this military involvement in social projects takes on absurd dimensions. When university student Manuel Bazo first heard the helicopters and then saw them dropping leaflets, he feared the worst. "I thought it was a coup," he recalls. Not quite. It was just an informational literature drop to inform people in a nearby barrio when the army would be sending in dentists, barbers and other free services.

Most of the money for the reform program comes from recently buoyant oil prices, but the Chavez government is also seeking to redirect state funds that are currently consumed by a corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy. "We may have political power, but we still don't control the government," says Gilberto Buenano, vice minister of regional planning, who, like Vila, got his Ph.D. at Berkeley in the late '60s. "Here in Venezuela, those are two very different things."

According to Buenano, the country's vast oil wealth—as much as \$20 billion in annual revenues—has created not just oligarchs, but also a parasitic middle class. Venezuela's financially flush, labyrinthine state sector has plenty of room for nepotism, patronage, corruption and sheltered incompetence. The World Bank says the only solution is mass privatization. The Chavistas agree with the diagnosis but refuse the neoliberal medicine. They want to make the state efficient, not sell it off to foreign interests.

Using his weekly radio call-in show, *Aló Presidente*, Chavez routinely urges workers and consumers to denounce corruption where they see it. And although the government has raised wages across the board, it also has tried to eliminate thousands of government jobs—which the Chavistas insist are sinecures. For example, one steel mill in Ciudad Guyana is said to have as many 6,000 people on the payroll who don't exist.

But attempts to eliminate this sort of bloat have caused a mas-



HEATHER ROGERS

sive backlash from the country's unions, which have staged scores of strikes in every sector of the economy. Though vexed by the labor disputes, the government is also proud of its record in handling them. "In all these strikes not a single person has been killed, there are no political prisoners," Buenano says. "Not even our most rabid opponents can accuse us of repression."

Yet the president's electoral successes have yet to translate into grassroots participatory structures. Nowhere is such failure more apparent than in the unions. Shown in numerous opinion polls to be among the least credible and least respected institutions in the nation, the old-guard trade union leadership was dealt a serious blow in December 2000, when 67 percent of voters passed a referendum mandating the direct election of union leaders by the rank and file. The plan was simple: force the unions to democratize, then take power from the old guard hacks in clean elections. But now those internal elections are underway, the Bolivarian activists are losing badly.

The private sector also is being leaned on to help pay for the reform and development campaign. In June, government officials announced plans to clamp down on tax evasion by large businesses. Investigators plan to audit about a thousand companies, but among the first targeted are a major television network, a bank and a leading telecommunications firm. Despite all appearances of profitability, these firms claim they cannot afford to pay taxes. "I don't believe them," Chavez said in a mid-June radio broadcast. "Either they pay, or their bones will end up in prison."

Yet another hurdle for the Chavistas is a quiet "human capital strike" among the professional classes. There is an internal brain drain: engineers, accountants and agronomists—hopped-up on anti-Chavez propaganda—refuse to participate in alternative development projects, while local doctors prefer to focus on plastic surgery for the country's legendary beauty queens rather than tend to the needs of the rural poor. This lack of support is particularly frustrating because much of Chavez's macroeconomic program has benefited the professional classes. Since taking office, the administration has cut inflation from around 40 percent to a projected 12 percent for this year. Meanwhile, the Venezuelan economy is expected to grow by a healthy 4 percent this year, according to Credit Suisse First Boston.

Yet the middle-class-oriented news media remain uniformly hostile. Not a day passes without anti-Chavez calumny covering almost every front page. Both print and broadcast outlets routinely fabricate stories about impending martial law, economic collapse or new medical evidence that Chavez is psychotic. Along with the frenzied red-baiting, the media attack Chavez for being "vulgar" and "uncultured"—code that is widely understood as a reference to his African and indigenous origins and working-class mannerisms.

Amid this self-induced paranoia, Venezuelan capitalists have reduced domestic investment, citing "political instability." Instead, much of the country's liquid assets are piped to Miami; one economist estimated such capital flight at more than \$10 billion last year alone. The government is trying to incubate small firms with a new micro-lending law and cheap loans from newly created state banks. But these banks have already become mired in corruption and inefficiency.

Some Chavez supporters are urging the president to publicly court the middle classes and national bourgeoisie. "The problem is that Chavez has to talk tough or lose some of his base," explains Walter Sandoval, an economic journalist with the Caracas daily *El Nacional*. Sandoval says the poor want change—and lots of it—right now. And while government's increased social spending has positive impacts, the economic position of most people has not changed fundamentally. Nor are the poor likely to wait patiently if Chavez coddles and coaxes cooperation from the spooked shopping-mall set. All of this has left Chavez in a bizarre predicament: economically serving but politically alienating the middle-class professionals his development plans desperately need.

Despite all of the obstacles, many Chavistas remain hopeful. "Little by little, it'll happen," says Don Julio Cezar, a restaurateur in the small beach town of Santa Fe. "The people are learning, the economy is developing. This is not a violent revolution—it'll take time."

Officially, the United States has taken a "wait-and-see" attitude toward Chavez, but Washington's stance may be hardening. "I am concerned sometimes when I see what [Chavez] does," Vice President Dick Cheney told *The Associated Press* in early June. "He was democratically elected by the people of Venezuela, and that counts for something. Sometimes, I wish he had other friends is the way I'd describe it."

More threatening are the bellicose allegations from the State Department's specialist on Latin America, Peter Romero, who has called Chavez and his civilian defense minister, Jose Vicente Rangel, "professional agitators." "There are indications that the government of Chavez has supported violent indigenous movements in Bolivia and, in the case of Ecuador, military coup members," Romero told the *Washington Post*.

Shortly after these statements, the *Miami Herald* reported that Washington was reducing its intelligence cooperation with Venezuela because, as one official explained, "There was a sense that anything we gave the Venezuelans would wind up in Havana." And in late October, angered by Chavez's public criticisms of the "slaughter of innocents" in Afghanistan, the United States called its ambassador back to Washington for "consultations."

Another serious threat is Washington's ability to exert economic pressure on Venezuela. In an attempt to diversify the economy, Chavez sought to join the Andean Trade Preferences Act (ATPA) and thus gain better access to U.S. markets, but American officials have signaled their reluctance to permit Venezuela's entry. "On ATPA, Venezuela is going to have an uphill battle because a lot of folks here are concerned about reaching out to Chavez at a time when he's not being very friendly to us," a Republican congressional aide told the *Herald*.

None of this American hostility is lost on Venezuelans. Before departing Caracas, we eat the traditional dish of arepas and drink rum with a diehard trade unionist. He says the Chavistas are ready to arm themselves to defend the revolution at all costs. "Any coup attempt will lead to civil war," he warns, adding: "I wonder if the oil-hungry United States is really ready for that." ■

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# The Vagina that Roared

By S.L. Wisenberg

**W**e have been seeing and hearing much from and about that silent, nearly numb vessel, the vagina, these past few decades. We saw a hint of them, en masse, in Judy Chicago's vulvic installation *The*

**The Camera My Mother Gave Me**  
By Susanna Kaysen  
Knopf  
157 pages, \$21

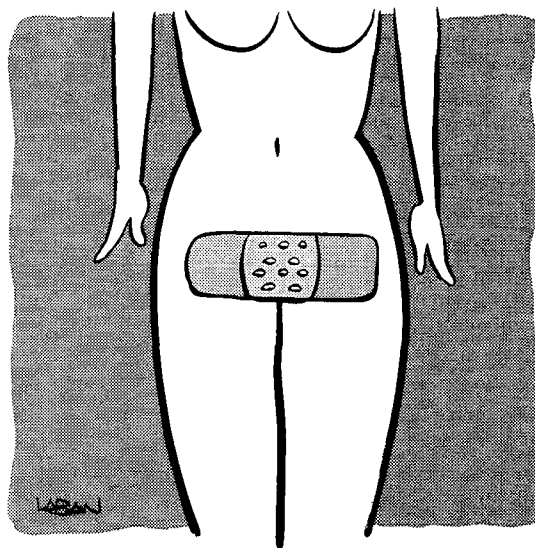
*Dinner Party*; read about them in *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, *The Hite Report*, *Cunt* and most recently *Her Way*; and have heard from them most vocally on countless stages from Hong Kong to Rio in *The Vagina Monologues*. Its excitable neighbor, the clitoris, had its due in last year's *The Clitoral Truth*.

Now here comes a report from a singing, zinging individual vagina in pain. It belongs to Susanna Kaysen, famously known for *Girl, Interrupted*. That book was written in lyrical segments; it was narrative in a strict sense, because it began with Kaysen's form for admission into MacLean Hospital for borderline-personality disorder and ended with her release document. (Outcome: "Recovered." Destination: "Apartment.") The pieces move back and forth in time and cover day-to-day life during the 496 days in an elite mental hospital, broken up by musings about such things as craziness and the difference between the brain and the mind.

This new book, *The Camera My Mother Gave Me*, is also in segments but marches through time more regularly. It is in its essence a mystery story: What plagues Susanna's vagina? Will this cure work? Will the next? And will she dump her insensitive boyfriend, who asks what "the pussy doctor" said, and who insists on blow jobs when she's not willing and fucking even when the pain is excruciating? Knowing of her intense pain, he still accuses her of having sex with a friend.

The problem is, well, as the specialist said, "You have a sore spot." She has red

spots under her clitoris and one of the lips, but most of the pain is centered on a one-inch segment on the left side of her vagina. It feels, at times, scraped, grated and drilled into. It hurts in the place where she'd had a cyst removed from a gland 20 years before. No one seems to be able to help, not the internist, not Tony the "wonderful Italian gynecologist," not the vulvologist who looks like a vulva ("soft mushy features and a little wispy mustache"), not the alternative nurse, the biofeedback "Urinazi" who wants to reprogram Kaysen's bladder. And not antifungal cream, estrogen, lubricant, vinegar rinses; not cortisone or oatmeal baths, nor soaks in tea or saltwater or baking soda; not dildo-like dilators nor anti-depressants to kill the pain. In time,



TERRY LABAN

she realizes, "my whole life revolves around doing something about this."

What is her problem? It could be oxalates in her urine that irritate the vulva, or neural misinterpretation or a disorder of the pelvic-floor muscles. Maybe a virus? It could be cured by surgery—or not. Success in such operations, she learns, is about 50/50. The odds, she decides, are not worth it.

**T**his slim book could be called *Woman, Interrupted*. It's not as rich and full and deep as *Girl*. It is a small book with big margins written by a

famous writer who, it's easy to forget, has also written two novels. *Girl* is ironic, clever at times, but not all that funny. Yet by page 22 of this painful new book I had laughed out loud three times. Once was when the alternative nurse tells her to put boric acid in a capsule and insert it in her vagina:

Boric acid kills roaches, I said.  
You're a lot bigger than a roach, she said.

Another time she's researching her medical problem: "I liked the title *Clinical Journal of Pain*. I could think of a lot of articles to write for them: 'Impacted Wisdom Tooth,' 'Twisted Ankle in the Subway,' 'Inappropriate Boyfriends.'"

I think that's funny—deadpan ingenuousness, the innocence of a curious person trying to figure out this pesky vagina. Her persona seems to be a bustling little woman from a storybook or a woodland animal in a jumper and ruffles, looking earnestly here and there for an answer. The fairy-tale quality has to do with the pared-down language, the lack of quotation marks, the distance. She does not delve into her sexual history, just dips into it briefly. She offers little on sexuality in general or the mysteries of desire. It boils down to this: Everything was fine before. Even with this guy. And then this happened.

And when the sex falls apart, the relationship soon follows. The reader wonders when and if she will dump the increasingly obnoxious boyfriend, who can't understand why she won't just get surgery. She describes the night when after more than a month of abstinence, they have intercourse: "I did still want to fuck him, in an abstracted, nostalgic sort of way. That is, if I'd wanted to fuck at all, I would have wanted to fuck him. But I didn't want to."

At first the experience is wonderful, then she feels raw and sore, as if being sliced. She says nothing:

I pulled away inside myself, so that the events on the bed were far from where "I" was, and the pain was far away also. That worked, but I didn't like doing it. There was something nasty about it. I had the thought, People who don't like sex must feel

this way. Then I realized that now I was somebody who didn't like sex.

She finally decides to get rid of him, for the sake of her vagina. The book should have a happy ending: She saves the vagina by dumping the cad and all's well. Except it doesn't work out that way. Her vagina still hurts; a young man she's attracted to does not, as she had thought, desire her. She blames the misperception on her vagina: "But my vagina and I were wrong."

This personification of the vagina is eventually too much for my taste. There's the "dead vagina," the "blind vagina" and the vagina as the "organ that looks to the future."

The book ends in limbo, as real life often does. There's no clear diagnosis, though toward the end she says, "Desire—mine for my boyfriend, and his toxic, incessant desire for me—had made me ill." But that's too simple. The jury is still out. Disease is a language, she says in the epilogue. The vagina has something to say. "I'm still listening."

**A**t the end of *Girl, Interrupted*, Kaysen explains the title—it's taken from a Vermeer painting. The title of *The Camera My Mother Gave Me* is explained only on the jacket. I'm not sure if it works. We are told that in a scene in Buñuel's *Viridiana*, "Some peasants are at a banquet in a country mansion. They ask a maid to take a group snapshot, and she obliges, lifting up her skirt and using the 'camera' that's underneath." In fact, they are reenacting the Last Supper as a surreal, debauched dinner party, and the maid is making a joke, exposing herself instead of taking a photo, using the object of male gaze to take a pretend photo. Kaysen may be emphasizing that she herself began to see the world through the lens of her vagina. Is Kaysen also saying that her own private "camera" was meant to be a lively sexual object, but fell on hard times? I would like to know more about the "before" of her vaginal history.

The camera is a thing that separates us from others, at the same time connecting us. Named for a servant's joke, the title brings up questions of class, which Kaysen does not deal with directly. Her friends are of the professional class; the boyfriend

is a carpenter. She does not mention money, insurance (except once, briefly) or the crazy world of HMOs. This is a remembrance of privilege.

And yet, writers often come from privilege. That's no reason to damn a book. This chronicle is important because it tells of a journey not often spoken of. The reader can do some of the work of musing about sexuality, power and force in relationships, and

about pain, based on the specifics that Kaysen describes. But the book isn't entirely satisfying because it could go further—into Kaysen's contemplation on the meaning of it all. ■

S.L. Wisenberg is the author of *The Sweetheart Is In*, a short story collection, and the forthcoming essay collection *Holocaust Girls*. Her Web site is [www.slwisenberg.com](http://www.slwisenberg.com).

## Rhythm and Sorrow

By Joshua Klein

**O**n May 18, 1980, Ian Curtis, husband, father and lead singer of Joy Division, committed suicide on the eve of the band's first American tour. Were Joy Division just another band, the story would end there, the band's two albums and scattered sin-

### Heart and Soul

Joy Division  
Rhino

Get Ready  
New Order  
Reprise

gles merely artifacts lodged amidst the rubble of punk rock. But two decades after the group effectively disbanded, Curtis' death still casts an imposing shadow that threatens to enshroud anyone who dares exhume the band's grim body of work. Curtis has come to symbolize depression and gloom, and his name is inextricable from his sad demise.

The three remaining members of Joy Division have said they became New Order not because they wanted to try something different, but because they knew that their music could never be the same. There's a reason it's his blurred visage that graces *Heart and Soul*, a four-disc boxed set, rather than a full band shot. Despite the obvious importance of Bernard Sumner's primitive guitar, Peter Hook's strummed bass and Stephen Morris' hyperactive drums, Curtis' spirit dominates the music.

*Heart and Soul* includes virtually everything Joy Division ever recorded (singles, albums, EPs, unreleased live rarities), and its somber design and stately reverence

serve more effectively as Curtis' eulogy than any other previous collection. Joy Division is undeniably the sound of one man's unspeakable anguish, the echoes of his doubt-ridden questions—"Could these sensations make me feel the pleasures of a normal man?" or "Can I go on with this train of events?"—bouncing unanswered off the studio walls. Indeed, one of *Heart and Soul*'s greatest attributes is a full lyric sheet, so armchair analysts can now scrutinize each of the band's songs for suicidal subtext.

Even though it's impossible to listen to Curtis' lyrics without thinking of his fate, Joy Division's music still sounds remarkably rootless. Even the early material, released in 1978 under the name Warsaw, finds the quartet struggling against the rigid conventions of punk. By the time of Joy Division's second (and final) album *Closer*, the band had metamorphosed into something completely different, an artful synthesis of clatter and grace, ethereal keyboards and abrasive noise, doom-laden dance music that would later be deemed "death disco." *Closer* solidified Joy Division's reputation and ensured that its legacy would continue on in bands across the musical spectrum. The music still screams with an urgent vibrancy, like Edgar Allan Poe's protagonist in "The Premature Burial" struggling for one last gasp of air.

**F**ast forward approximately 20 years. New Order, arguably the laziest band alive, have released *Get Ready*, their first album in eight years. Against all odds every bit as influential and important as their predecessor, New Order made electronic music vital and viable as pop



music. The group never set down their instruments even as they fiddled with drum machine prototypes and early synthesizers, working in relative secrecy and performing with unabashed sloppiness. That their music proved successful surely baffled the group, even as it bolstered the rabid fans that scrambled for every single and remix.

Sumner took over for Curtis as singer because, apparently, he drew the short straw in a band lotto. Once given the chance to lead, his lyrics quickly moved to more casual turf than Curtis traversed. In fact, Sumner's own gift seemed to be the ability to magically stumble upon a good line here and there, instantly making up for all his daft clunkers. That same sense of random brilliance pervades New Order's catalog. No single New Order album sounds like it was started and finished with a clear gameplan in mind, but most of the time the impromptu strategy paid off.

**N**ew Order could have continued in the same somber vein of Joy Division, but chance band decisions transformed the group into something else. To get an idea of what Joy Division might have become, one need only seek out the recently released *Crystal Days*, which collects many of the works of New Order's hyper-serious rivals Echo and the Bunnymen. New Order could never keep an entirely straight face, but maybe that's how the band managed to best the competition. Says Echo's Ian McCulloch: "They changed the face of music. They were more influential in affecting their chosen genre: dance music."

McCulloch's effusive praise comes as a shock, considering his own impressive ego, but it also stands utterly at odds with the insignificance of New Order's recent output. Something happened to New Order at the end of the '80s. Perhaps disillusioned by the ease of new digital technology or just bored of stardom, the band receded into side-projects and inactivity.

The relatively strong 1993 comeback *Republic*, it turns out, was recorded primarily as a means to clear some debts, even if the results may have worked out better than planned. Hindered by drugs, drink and indifference, New Order once again proved they had it in



SPELLER/RETNA

No joy for New Order.

themselves to play music that was without a doubt New Order, but something was still missing.

*Get Ready* abandons all pioneering pretense. In fact, the disc could easily be dismissed as a regressive effort, jettisoning almost all electronics in favor of electric guitar overload. The minimal synths and pattering canned beats were one of the group's trademarks, and without them New Order sound pretty bland. Yes, Hook's bass playing remains reassuring, as do Sumner's lazy lyrics, but the disc as a whole never reaches that perfect mix of naïve charm, punk edge and techno utopia.

Maybe there's a clue to be found in the two conspicuous guest singers, a New Order first. Former Smashing Pumpkin Billy Corgan and Primal Scream's Bobby Gillespie may be two of New Order's biggest fans, but a group of such stature need not coast on the presence of distracting interlopers. Or do they? It's sad to think that this far into an amazing career, New Order have seen fit to capitulate to vague notions of radio-friendly material and commercial appeal. The last thing we need now is just another "rock" band, especially coming from an act known for so much more. Minus its maverick status, the band is simply less than the sum of its parts, a reversal of the very charm that made it so interesting to begin with.

*Heart and Soul* only enhances the reputation of Joy Division, who sounded like they made music because they had to. New Order, on the other hand, for the first time sound like a band making music just because they can. That's the path of a dinosaur act, not a trailblazer. With all the freedom that New Order have gained through past successes, they could and should have done so much more, even within the relatively narrow boundaries of rock music. The still-strong legacy of Joy Division's briefly-lived greatness only makes New Order's failure that much more apparent. ■

**Joshua Klein**, a freelance music critic, also writes for the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Reader*.

## Fille, Interrupted

By Julien Lapointe

**F**rench director Catherine Breillat's *Fat Girl* is largely about survival. The original title, *À ma soeur!* ("to my sister"), is a dedication to the one who didn't get away. Beyond the differences in translation, the film will

### Fat Girl

Written and directed by Catherine Breillat

confound American viewers unfamiliar with the often contrary dynamics of gender and sexual politics in France. As far as identity goes, sex and gender are sepa-

rate categories. So it's possible for a society to be sexually permissive, but far less liberal in its gender politics, or vice versa. Hence France still holds the Marquis de Sade in its literary canon, while the United States is the homeland of anti-porn feminism.

The story, as scripted by Breillat, is deceptively simple. Anaïs (Anaïs Reboux), the said fat girl, is obscenely unfeminine, age 12 and a virgin. She and Elena (Roxane Mesquida), her nubile older sister of 15, are with their parents away on vacation. Strolling across a cafe terrace, they meet Fernando

(Libero De Rienzo), a sexually forthright law student; he and Elena get involved. The girls' parents are outraged to learn of the liaison, leading to a violent conclusion and rite of passage for Anaïs.

Capturing a slice of middle-class life gone terribly awry, Breillat portrays Anaïs' estrangement from her milieu with painstaking precision. At the pool, the family sun-bathes idly together, while Anaïs floats around. Sporting a bright green suit, she stands out from the surrounding blue and sun-bleached colors. Her disproportionate figure weighs in on the sterile compositions—with her prepubescent curves rolling into fat, she's the only sensuality in her stifling environment.

Treading back and forth in the pool, speaking to imaginary lovers, she exhibits a stubborn naïveté. "I'm just me," she seems to be announcing as the camera privileges her mass of a presence, following her as she rises from the pool, swipes her mother's sunscreen, and lies down at a distinct remove from her folks.

Breillat coats *Fat Girl* in a naturalist veneer. Reboux and Mesquida's acting seems unrehearsed, rudimentary, with laissez-faire body language and flat diction. Ever the dry minimalist, Breillat consistently underplays the most melodramatic of episodes: Anaïs lies in bed weeping while, in the background, Elena gets laid. There's no center to the frame, Anaïs' bulk of sobs cornered in the bottom-left; no rise or fall in the action, just a deadpan glimpse of crying and fucking.

The story line is built on discreet coincidences and chance encounters, the banal everyday taking on larger-than-life proportions. In the catastrophic finale, the narrative trajectory suddenly reveals the cold logic of Greek drama, shocking the viewer into re-evaluating the characters, the story and its thematic intent. Breillat's roots are really in her national cinema, the *dramas intimistes* of the past 20 years, with their stark realism chronicling a day-by-day grind that gradually reaches a fatalistic narrative arc. *Fat Girl*'s final surprise is unrivaled, yet inevitable.

Our perception of the sisters changes during the course of the film. Elena may seem to have the edge on Anaïs: She's older, sexy and doesn't cry as often. But chip a nail on that perfect physique and

the proportions fall to pieces: She's image-conscious, vulnerable, the Venus de Milo recast in matchsticks. Anaïs is the wiser and more resilient of the two. Her belly protrudes past her patty-like breasts, but it's shock-absorbent. If you punched her with the latest copy of *Vogue*, her blubber would just suck it in and spit it back out.

in the film, faced with the abusive monitoring of parental authority and its repression of adolescent sexuality, there's a disturbingly odd freedom to be found in rape. Sex, in any form, is autonomy, as long as you hold onto your dignity.

Breillat remains a disconcerting filmmaker. She's definitely open to the



Anaïs Reboux and Roxane Mesquida find a place in the sun.

Setting up her narrative, as she does, with two diametrically opposed physical types, Breillat leads us, unconventionally, to a bit of conventional wisdom: In the long run, it's the fat girls, not the beauty queens, who are better off. Anaïs understands the ins-and-outs of sex more incisively than her more experienced sister—as Breillat's logic would have it, outsiders always get the better vantage point. At the vacation's end, Anaïs compassionately suggests that Elena forget Fernando, and it becomes clear she's already several years ahead of her sister.

Surviving the body politics of sex, as you grow up, is what *Fat Girl* is all about. And it's crucial to Breillat's politics as a French feminist that she can't think reductively about sex. In a pivotal scene, she films a rape as a moment of both brutality and intimacy. With considerable gall, the young victim's subsequent withholding of her trauma from her parents is shown as a moment of affirmation. As portrayed

ambiguities of sexual experience. But part of what makes *Fat Girl* such a potent film is its refusal to treat rape sociologically: as a systematic form of misogynistic abuse, as a byproduct of patriarchy. *Fat Girl*, deeply antithetical to U.S.-style feminism, offers such a pornographic, insolently frank look at a woman's sexual experience, it will most likely jar and even nauseate conventional-minded progressives.

An admirer of Nagisa Oshima, Breillat wears her debt to *In the Realm of the Senses* on her sleeve. Oshima has set the standards for sex in modernist film, displaying the most tense of erotic scenarios with cold formalist rigor. Faced with the visual frankness, perturbed viewers are made to feel that their own morality is irrelevant in this godless paradise we call sex. That's why Anaïs' pain, in witnessing her sister's deflowering, remains so acute. In these troubled modern times, being a virgin is now the deadliest of sins. ■

Julien Lapointe is a freelance film critic.

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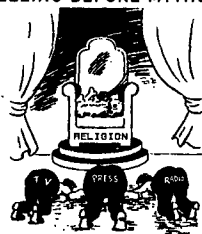
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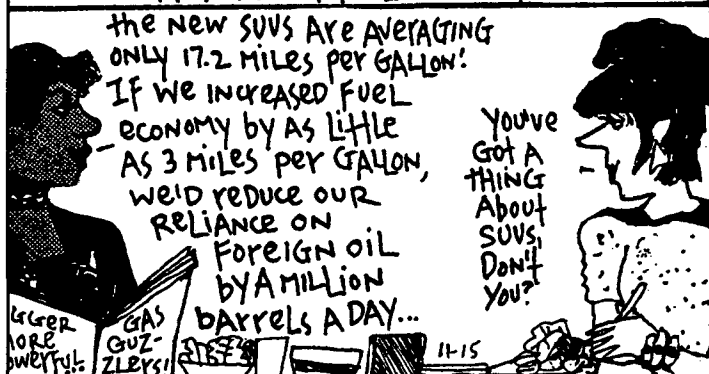
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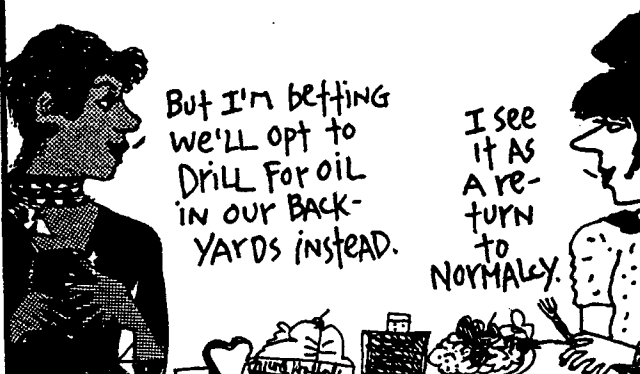
## SYLVIA

### CHATS About FUEL Economy



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## By Nicole Hollander



Continued from back page

of folk rock and country rock. He settles down with the Band to create the extraordinary Basement Tapes, not officially released until 1975, when America begins a bit more introspection itself. **Masterpieces:** "All Along the Watchtower," "I Shall Be Released," "Knockin' On Heaven's Door."

**Embarrassments:** *Self Portrait.*

### Comeback Bob, 1974-1978

**American Life:** America tries to get back to normal, whatever that is. Self-help fads and spiritual trends dominate popular culture, while disco music and bizarre novelty songs enjoy a brief popularity. But as Third World nations begin a series of post-Vietnam revolts, squeezing energy prices, America starts to feel a bit vulnerable. Elvis drops dead and punk rock begins to stir.

**Bob's Life:** Bob suffers a wrenching divorce from his wife Sara and responds with *Blood on the Tracks*, his most emotionally vulnerable music. *The Basement Tapes* are released, as well as the powerful live album from his 1974 tour with the Band. Bob wraps up this phase with an embarrassing Vegas-lounge impression and a baffling four-hour movie of his epic "Rolling Thunder Tour" mixed with improvisational psychodramas.

**Masterpieces:** "Tangled Up in Blue," "Simple Twist of Fate," "Hurricane."

**Embarrassments:** *Bob Dylan at Budokan.*

### Christian Bob, 1978-1981

**American Life:** Jimmy Carter is stymied by uppity former colonies and a resurgent right-wing. America's mood turns ugly again as our Iranian Embassy is held hostage. A B-movie actor is elected president in 1980, signalling a new era of repression and reaction. One month later, John Lennon is shot dead in New York.

**Bob's Life:** Inexplicably, Bob decides that he is a born-again Christian. Forgetting his earlier pronouncements about "lies that life is black and white," he now declares "there ain't no middle ground." Bob refuses to perform any of his pre-Christian songs, even "I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine," for Christ's sake. After three albums of intermittently moving gospel music, Bob suddenly decides he's Jewish again.

**Masterpieces:** "Gotta Serve Somebody," "Every Grain of Sand," "The Groom's Still Waiting at the Altar."

**Embarrassments:** Oh Jesus, where do I begin?

### Secular Bob, 1981-1991

**American Life:** The Reagan-Bush era marches on with a popular series of feel-good TV wars, and an even nastier series of secret wars offscreen. Gorbachev takes power in Russia, unilaterally defusing the Cold War. Rock music splits into a variety of subcultures while superstars Bruce, Michael, Prince and Madonna rule the charts in mid-decade.

**Bob's Life:** Bob secretly marries one of his backup singers, embarks on a series of tours with other old-timers like Carlos Santana, Tom Petty and the Grateful Dead, and then decides to tour constantly for the rest of his life. He alternates promis-

ing or even brilliant albums with lackluster toss-offs, but also rediscovers his sense of humor with the Traveling Wilburys.

**Masterpieces:** "Clean-Cut Kid," "Man in the Long Black Coat," "Everything Is Broken."

**Embarrassments:** *Knocked Out Loaded, Under the Red Sky.*

### Elder Bob, 1991-2001

**American Life:** America embarks on a love/hate affair with the alternately charming and disgusting President Clinton. Computer geeks and arbitragers become fabulously wealthy while the rest of the country does just well enough to make up for the last slump. Alternative rock rises up from the underground and then sinks back again.

**Bob's Life:** Bob shows up at the Grammys shortly after the Gulf War with a passionate but nearly indecipherable version of "Masters of War." Not long after, he is quoted as saying that the world has enough Bob Dylan songs, and releases two albums of old folk tunes. Then Bob, who has never quit smoking, is nearly killed by a mysterious heart infection. At that point he decides the world needs more Bob Dylan songs after all and releases the dark, cynical and humorous *Time Out of Mind*, followed by the arresting single "Things Have Changed." He receives honors from the president and the pope, and grabs an Oscar for Best Song.

**Masterpieces:** "Not Dark Yet," "Things Have Changed," "Moonlight."

**Embarrassments:** Bob is now beyond embarrassment.

Since the Elder Bob phase has now lasted 10 years, and his latest album was released on September 11, 2001, it seems logical to assume that Bob will soon enter a new phase, just like America. My prediction:

### Muslim Bob, 2001-??

**American Life:** In a backlash against the corporate globalization and corrupt militarism that helped bring on the terror crisis, the illegitimate Bush administration is swept from office in 2004 by a tide of progressive voters. The new administration embarks on a Marshall Plan for the Third World and an environmentally conscious energy policy. A vital new strain of "world punk" sweeps the planet's airwaves.

**Bob's Life:** Inspired by the calls to social justice and egalitarianism in the Koran, Bob converts to Islam, changes his name to Robert X and grows a foot-long beard, interrupting his never-ending tour just long enough for a pilgrimage to Mecca.

**Masterpieces:** "My Sweet Allah," "No Liquor Passes My Lips," "Stuck Inside of Mecca with the Minneapolis Blues Again."

**Embarrassments:** Annoyed by a sarcastic review in *The New Yorker*, Bob challenges Salman Rushdie to a mud-wrestling match. ■

Mark Zepezauer is the author of *The CIA's Greatest Hits and Take the Rich Off Welfare*. He lives in Tucson, Arizona and carries on his shoulder a Siamese cat.



# Mind Out of Time

## The Seven Ages of Bob

By Mark Zepezauer

**O**n the occasion of *Love and Theft*, Bob Dylan's 30th studio album in 40 years (not counting *Dylan*, the unauthorized outtake collection) it seems an appropriate time to reflect on Bob's life and his effect on American culture—and vice versa. Suffice it to say that the new album will give you much to chew on. The arrangements continue to reflect Bob's estrangement from contemporary life, with nods to the '30s, '40s and '50s, while the words show a mixture of disillusionment and wisdom earned in 60 years on the planet. Bob's voice now sounds like he's about 100 years old, but that seems only fair, since he sounded like he was 60 when he was 20.

### Folkie Bob, 1961-1965

**American Life:** America emerges from the Eisenhower years and McCarthyism. Many embrace the idealism of the Kennedys; nascent anti-war and civil rights movements appear. The newfound exuberance is then shattered by the assassination of JFK.

**Bob's Life:** Young Robert Zimmerman, who trained for rock stardom by emulating Little Richard, emerges from the sticks and reinvents himself as Bob Dylan, tapping in to the hip folk music scene in Greenwich Village, telling audacious tall tales about his life on the road as an orphaned hobo child. He arrives at the hospital bed of his stricken idol Woody Guthrie, then astonishes everyone, including himself, with his preternatural songwriting skills.

**Masterpieces:** "Blowin' in the Wind," "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall," "Chimes of Freedom."

**Embarrassments:** *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, album cover and title.

### Electric Bob, 1965-1968

**American Life:** LBJ unleashes the dogs of hell on Southeast Asia. Riots erupt in the inner cities, protests over Vietnam and other issues proliferate. Baby Boom generation turns on to marijuana and LSD, flirts with rejection of consumer culture.



**Bob's Life:** Bob blows everybody away again by reinventing rock music, combining its emotional power with the lyrical maturity of classic folk and blues. Swept up into superstardom, Bob indulges his wicked sense of humor as well as a mean streak. He turns the Beatles on to pot and is turned on by their music at the same time. In the space of 16 months, he delivers perhaps the finest three albums in a row of any comparable artist. Then Bob crashes his motorcycle and nearly kills himself.

**Masterpieces:** "Like a Rolling Stone," "Subterranean Homesick Blues," "Visions of Johanna."

**Embarrassments:** Various snotty and arrogant comments.

### Country Bob, 1968-1974

**American Life:** More assassinations and more widespread rioting. The right-wing backlash puts Nixon in the White House and FBI infiltrators into the anti-war and civil rights movements. The national weirdness then escalates to a crescendo with the end of the Vietnam War and the fall of Nixon.

**Bob's Life:** Bob recuperates in upstate New York, begins writing quieter and more soft-spoken music, anticipating new strains

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